

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز مؤسسة صحفية عربية بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى.

Iran talks with S. Arabia

TEHRAN (AP) — Iran said Wednesday it was holding indirect talks with Saudi Arabia in an effort to restore diplomatic ties broken off last April. The Iranian news agency IRNA was quoted as saying that the talks were being held in Geneva, Switzerland, and that the two countries were discussing the issue of pilgrims to Mecca. The talks were said to be the first since the Iranian revolution in 1979. The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) received the news from an official source as saying.

King visits army unit

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, the supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Wednesday visited the command of the Third Royal Armoured Division and was briefed on the division's duties and training exercises.

The King met with the officers of the unit and explained to them current Arab and international issues and Jordan's efforts to achieve Arab solidarity. He also



His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday visits the Third Royal Armoured Division (Petra photo)

reaffirmed his absolute confidence in the armed forces, their role and efficiency. The King was accompanied by Royal Court Chief Field Marshal

Arab panel to consult more Lebanese leaders

TUNIS (Agencies) — Six Arab foreign ministers Wednesday gave up for the moment an attempt to solve Lebanon's constitutional crisis, saying they needed to consult more Lebanese leaders.

Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah of Kuwait, chairman of the committee, said Lebanon's two rival prime ministers and parliamentary speaker remained at odds, mainly over reforms to their country's sectarian-based political system.

"The committee decided to continue contacts with the rest of the Lebanese parties to reach a compromise formula to solve the present Lebanese crisis," a league statement said at the end of the three-day talks.

The committee earlier drafted a working document which it presented to the Lebanese leaders during separate meetings. League sources said the document was said to be a "synthesis of ideas" advanced by Aoun, Hoss and Hussein.

The committee is headed by Sheikh Sabah and includes foreign ministers from Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates and Sudan, along with Chadli Klibi, secretary-general of the Arab League.

The committee held separate talks with Michel Aoun, who was appointed in September by outgoing President Amin Gemayel to head an interim military cabinet, premier Salim Hoss and Hussein Hussein, speaker of the Lebanese parliament.

All three Lebanese agree on the need for presidential elections, withdrawal of foreign forces and constitutional reforms in favour of Lebanon's Muslims. But they differ on what they should tackle first.

King voices total support for Sudan

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday reaffirmed Jordan's total support for Sudan and the Kingdom's best wishes for the Sudanese people and government.

The King was speaking at a meeting at Al Nadwa Palace with Sudanese Defence Minister Abdul Majid Khalil and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mahdi Nimer. The two envoys delivered to

Israel agrees to Taba compromise

TEL AVIV (R) — The cabinet decided Wednesday to commit Israel to withdrawing from the disputed Taba border area in exchange for an Egyptian agreement to reopen negotiations, Israel radio reported. The decision to withdraw within a specified time frame was seen as a compromise gesture to the Egyptians, who have refused to schedule further talks because of a disagreement about a timetable for Israel to hand over the beachfront area (see page 2). Israel radio said U.S. mediator Abraham Sofaer would pass on the 10-member inner cabinet's decision to the Egyptians. The radio did not give any indication of the withdrawal schedule. Foreign ministry spokesmen said they were unable to comment on the report. Talks on the last remaining obstacles to handing back Taba stalled over Israel's insistence that the timetable for withdrawal could not be set until agreement was reached on the issues of access for Israeli tourists and compensation for Israeli owners of a luxury hotel and a holiday resort in Taba.

Rifai meets Turkish army chief

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Zaid Rifai had a meeting in his office Wednesday with visiting Turkish Army Chief of Staff General Necati Torumtay and a delegation accompanying him.

Rifai and Torumtay reviewed Jordanian-Turkish relations and means of promoting bilateral cooperation. The meeting was attended by Turkey's Ambassador to Jordan, Samih Belem.

The Turkish army chief of staff had a meeting at the army headquarters Tuesday evening with



Prime Minister Zaid Rifai Wednesday hold talks with Turkish army Chief of Staff General Necati Torumtay in a meeting attended by Turkish Ambassador to Jordan Samih Belem (Petra photo)

Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb. Torumtay was briefed on the development of the Jordanian Armed Forces. Bilateral cooperation was also discussed at the meeting.

The Turkish military delegation later visited the Royal Command and Staff College, the Royal War Academy, the Fifth Royal Armoured Division, and the Armed Forces workshops.

Crown Prince, UNRWA chief discuss services to refugees

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan had a meeting at the Royal Court Wednesday with United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Commissioner-General Giorgio Giacomelli with whom he reviewed the agency's services to Palestinian refugees.

Prince Hassan briefed Giacomelli on the on-going process to develop education in the Kingdom and provide training to teachers and improve school buildings and facilities.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thouqan Hindawi.

Earlier Wednesday, Giacomelli expressed deep concern over the closure by the Israeli occupation authorities of schools in the occupied West Bank.

In a statement to the Jordanian press, Giacomelli said that the closure of schools was a serious violation of international law and that UNRWA was doing its utmost to ensure that the education of Palestinian refugees was not interrupted.



His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday confers with Sudanese Defence Minister Abdul Majid Khalil (second from left) and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mahdi Nimer in a meeting attended by the Sudanese ambassador to Jordan (Petra photo)



Sadeq Al Mahdi

Khartoum cabinet reshuffled

KHARTOUM (AP) — Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi Wednesday announced Sudan's fourth government since 1986, with the fundamentalist National Islamic Front (NIF) retaining two key posts, the Sudan News Agency (SUNA) reported.

It said the front's leader, Hassan Al Tourabi, became foreign minister and deputy premier, and a member of his party, Hafez Al Sheikh Al Zaki, justice minister and attorney general.

The agency said the reshuffle involved 10 appointments — Tourabi and four other holdovers given different portfolios and five newcomers. Tourabi doubled as justice minister and acting foreign minister in the outgoing cabinet.

Five of the 10 seats went to Mahdi's Umma Party, the principal coalition partner, four to the NIF and one to a southern party. Defence Minister Abdul Majid Khalil of the Umma Party retained his post.

Minister of Information Abdulrahman Ahmad now takes over the economy and foreign trade brief. He is replaced by another Umma member, Beshir Omer who was finance minister for two years ending in May last year.

Also Ajo Deng, who had hitherto held the transport portfolio, was appointed minister of agriculture and second deputy prime minister.

Other changes included the ministries of health, energy, public works and housing. Mahdi Monday dissolved three ministerial portfolios to cut spending as part of a government austerity programme.

The reshuffle, announced on state radio Omdurman, followed the withdrawal from government last December of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

Mahdi, in office since May 1986, appointed Mubarak Al Fadel Al Mahdi as interior minister, replacing Abbas Abu Shamra Abdul Mahmoud, a former policeman.

The Foreign Ministry portfolio was previously held by DUP member Hussein Abu Saleh. The NIF now replaces the DUP as the main coalition partner with Mahdi's Umma Party.

Tourabi, a French-educated former law lecturer, wants the strict implementation of Sharia in Sudan. This is strongly opposed by rebels fighting the government in the south since 1983. He has opposed a peace pact reached between the rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the DUP which called for a freeze on the introduction of new Islamic laws before a constitutional conference was held.

The DUP quit the government to protest the rejection of the agreement and the SPLA, fighting to end what it sees as domination by the north, has escalated fighting and refused to meet government envoys.

LAST-MINUTE NEWS

Djibouti seeks Red Sea arrangement

RIYADH (R) — Djibouti is working with several Arab countries to coordinate security in the Red Sea, President Hassan Gouled has said. "We need to develop a united Arab security strategy in the Red Sea to confront all dangers that might threaten us," he told the Jeddah-based Okaz newspaper. "We are now contacting Arab countries on the Red Sea — Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Egypt and Jordan — in order to find this strategy for which we will work in the future." Gouled left Jeddah Wednesday after a visit of several days to receive treatment for an eye ailment, the Saudi Press Agency said.

UNICEF issues urgent Sudan aid appeal

GENEVA (AP) — The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) appealed Wednesday for \$15.5 million in emergency aid to Sudan for hundreds of thousands of people who are suffering from drought and civil war. The main aim is to help provide food, drugs and clean water for displaced people in southern Sudan, and the Khartoum area, a UNICEF spokesman said. Vaccination drives are planned after a measles outbreak killed all children under five in some villages last summer, Robert Rogers, a UNICEF representative in Khartoum, told a press conference.

EEC: No role in export debacle

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Commission said Wednesday it could not help Palestinian farmers recover money for their first direct shipment of citrus fruit to Western Europe. The growers say they have received nothing for 4,000 tonnes of grapefruit they shipped to the Netherlands last month and may even be sued by Dutch importers to recover unexpected costs. A spokesman for the commission, the European Economic Community's (EEC) executive body, said Brussels was aware of the difficulties but added: "The commission is not able to intervene in matters that are purely commercial."

Yugoslavia to hold early congress

BELGRADE (R) — Yugoslavia's divided Communist Party decided Wednesday to hold a congress this year, at least six months ahead of schedule, but failed to repair the split in its ranks caused by a bitter power struggle at the top. The policy-making Central Committee decided on the congress, but without making it an emergency meeting which could tip the power balance in favour of Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic and against party leader Stipe Sivar. The exact date, agenda and regular or emergency status of the congress would be decided by the Central Committee within three months, Tanjug news agency said. A congress had not been due until around June 1990.

Amal Hizbollah to evacuate casualties

BEIRUT (R) — Militia rivals agreed Wednesday to evacuate casualties from their battles in South Lebanon as the first step in implementing a peace agreement. Sources in the Amal and Hizbollah militias said the wounded would be evacuated from the village of Bakh, Thursday morning. Leaders of the two factions signed an agreement in Damascus Monday to end a year of strife that has killed hundreds. Iran and Syria, who brought the two sides together, have submitted implementation of the deal.

Mitterrand, Gandhi hold talks

NEW DELHI (AP) — President Francois Mitterrand of France and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi held a hour-long closed-door meeting Wednesday and delegations from the two countries met for discussions on economic cooperation in a wide range of areas including nuclear power, officials said. The two countries signed agreements for expanding scientific cooperation in biotechnology and biomedical sciences and to set up the world's largest facility to manufacture viral vaccines, they said. An Indian Foreign Ministry official said the two leaders briefly discussed expansion of cooperation in atomic energy and space exploration but did not reach an agreement. Mitterrand, accompanied by his wife Danielle and eight cabinet ministers, arrived in New Delhi earlier Wednesday for a four-day official visit. He was welcomed at the presidential palace by President Ramaswamy Venkateswaram. Gandhi, members of the Indian cabinet and senior officials.

Iran marks revolution anniversary

NICOSIA (AP) — Schoolbells pealed across Iran Wednesday and hundreds of prisoners were freed as the country began 10 days of celebrations marking the 10th anniversary of the revolution that ended 2,500 years of monarchy, Tehran Radio reported.

The radio, monitored in Nicosia, said the school bells, joined by those of Armenian churches, began ringing at 9.03 a.m. (0533 GMT).

That was the exact minute Feb. 1, 1979, that an Air France jetliner carrying Ayatollah Khomeini, the religious leader who masterminded the revolution, home from 15 years in exile landed at Tehran's Mehrabad airport to a tumultuous welcome by millions of his supporters.

The celebrations, which include sports tournaments, cultural festivals, fireworks displays and reenactments of revolutionary events in the streets, are the first held in peacetime since 1980, following the Aug. 20 ceasefire in the war against Iraq.

They will climax Feb. 11, the anniversary of the day the last government formed by the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi collapsed and the revolutionaries took over to proclaim the republic.

The celebrations take place against a backdrop of change, with some leaders seeking to ease religious, political and social restrictions after the hardships of the war and a new awareness that Iran must end its self-imposed isolation.

The authorities have suspended the execution of narcotics smugglers during the celebrations.

More than 130 convicted smugglers have been executed since early January in a nationwide crackdown, in which scores more have been reported killed in shootouts with security forces and more than 1,500 people arrested.

Nonetheless, the celebrations began amid a wave of political executions and political in-fighting between so-called pragmatists in the Tehran hierarchy and radicals, jockeying for position for the power struggle that is expected to flare when Khomeini dies.

PLO rejects Shamir plans as outdated stock

TUNIS (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) rejected Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's latest peace plan Wednesday, describing it as outdated and a pretext for continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"I advise Mr. Shamir to stop digging into his old stock and bringing out these goods which are out of date... no Palestinians or Arabs will speak to him on this basis," PLO spokesman Ahmad Abdul Rahman told Reuters.

Shamir told reporters his new plan envisaged "autonomy" for the occupied territories and an Israeli troop withdrawal from urban centres followed five years later by negotiations on the future status of the occupied territories.

Abdul Rahman said the plan looked almost identical to the

Palestinian "autonomy" proposals agreed by Israel and Egypt in the Camp David accords of 1978. "Shamir's proposals are not proposals for peace, but for continued occupation," the spokesman said. "So the intifada will continue and we will escalate it until Shamir understands the facts on the ground."

"The Palestinian people are struggling for self-determination, complete Israeli withdrawal and their independent state. There are no other solutions."

Shamir's proposals showed that the international community, especially Europe and the United States, must still put pressure on Israel to come to the negotiating table, he added.

It was Shamir's most conciliatory statement yet on Israel's future role in the occupied territories.

"At a certain stage, when there is autonomy, the army will leave several urban centres and be focused in some other areas," he told reporters after addressing a group of visiting North American rabbis.

He also referred to "some concentration of our troops in special locations, not including big centres of population," during a period of "autonomy" for Palestinians.

Shamir pointed out that such a move is called for in the U.S.-brokered Camp David accords, which he supports. But he has not defined what steps Israel would be willing to take to get the peace process moving.

In the past, Shamir, who heads the right-wing Likud bloc, also has told Jewish settlers that Israel would never give up the West Bank or Gaza.

Asked if what he said was part of the peace proposal he has been promising to present, Shamir said: "These principles are part of the government programme."

The prime minister said the most crucial step in the peace process is to begin negotiations. "Once we get to this stage positive results will come," he said.

In his remarks to reporters Wednesday, Shamir again stated that Israel would never talk to the PLO and would not accept a Palestinian state.

The PLO Wednesday said it was ready to meet an Israeli delegation in Geneva during a meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission currently examining Israel's treatment of Palestinians.

Sources close to the Israeli delegation said it would turn down the offer.

Iraq-Iran military panel likely to meet soon

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraqi and Iranian military officers will likely meet soon for technical talks aimed at strengthening the five-month-old Gulf war ceasefire, the commander of the United Nations monitoring group said Wednesday.

General Slavko Jovic, who heads the U.N. Iran-Iraq Military Observation Group (UNIIMOG) supervising the ceasefire, told reporters the two countries were asked to forward officers' names for participation in a mixed military group that would be formed with UNIIMOG.

He said the mixed military committee could meet "very soon" in the no-man's zone along the ceasefire line.

The Yugoslav general said the group would work out technical details for stabilising the Aug. 20 ceasefire that halted the Gulf war.

Iran and Iraq agreed to set up the military committee after U.N. special envoy Jan Eliasson held talks in Baghdad and Tehran last week.

Jovic said that setting up the group was "a very important step towards stabilising the ceasefire," along the 1,190-kilometre front-line.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati Tuesday described Baghdad's decision as a positive step.

Both Iranian and Iraqi officers will serve on the group along with UNIIMOG officers but no details have been given on how it will operate.

The foreign ministers of Iran and Iraq are expected to visit New York next week when the Security Council debates the peacekeeping force, a U.N. spokesman said Tuesday.

The presence of both foreign ministers would give Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar a chance to discuss the Iran-Iraq peace talks, which deadlocked soon after they began Aug. 25.

U.N. officials hope Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and Velayati, will be present when the Security Council considers a six-month extension of UNIIMOG Feb. 8, said U.N. spokesman Francois Giuliani.

The foreign ministers have not announced whether they will attend next week's council session.

Perez de Cuellar received a briefing Tuesday from Eliasson. "The secretary-general considers this visit to have been most useful for the continuation of his efforts within the framework of Security Council Resolution 598," the spokesman said.

The only element of the resolution so far implemented is the ceasefire declared last August.

"The secretary-general is confident that the exchanges which took place during the past week and the indications received from both sides can add momentum to the peace process. And he hopes to be able to see both foreign ministers in the near future," the spokesman said.

Perez de Cuellar also welcomed the cooperation of the two sides with his efforts and with the UNIIMOG.

Iran's Parliament Speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani believes that war is unlikely to resume, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported Wednesday.

The agency quoted Rafsanjani as saying he could not exclude the possibility of the Gulf war flaring again but that "such a possibility is not very high."

Mubarak assails Israel over Taba pullout delay

CAIRO (R)— Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak accused Israel Wednesday of obstructing relations with Cairo by insisting on compensation before quitting the Sinai seaside resort of Taba.

The Israeli army radio said Israel's inner cabinet had decided to set a date for withdrawal from Taba in return for a resumption of talks on property ownership and Israeli access.

Mubarak's remarks to reporters were his strongest on the Taba issue since international arbitrators awarded the small strip at the top of the Gulf of Aqaba to Egypt last September. "I cannot understand what the Israeli government wants... there is a court ruling," the national Middle East News Agency (MENA) quoted the president as saying.

"They are putting obstacles in the path of relations between the two countries because of the (Israeli-owned) Sonesta hotel. It is very strange. I can't understand them," he said.

An Israeli foreign ministry official said he could not immediately confirm the army radio report. Mubarak asked: "Do they think that by complicating things they can get extra tens of millions of pounds?"

U.S.-mediated talks this week have failed to resolve a row over whether Israel should pull out of Taba before or after details of the hotel's future have been agreed.

Egypt wants the Israelis to quit Taba immediately and then negotiate compensation for the Sonesta hotel, its future management and access for Israeli tourists to Taba. Israel wants the issues resolved first.

In the meantime the Israelis still occupy Taba although the latest deadline for an end to negotiations expired last Sunday.

Mubarak said: "I tell them — respond to the call of peace and there is no need for such complications. A court ruling was issued on the land, we were all satisfied with it, so what are those complications?"

"I fear the consequences in the future."

The leading U.S. expert on Taba, State Department legal adviser Abraham Sofaer, was due to discuss the row with Foreign



Hosni Mubarak

Minister Esmat Abdul Meguid later Wednesday.

Egyptian officials said they expected Sofaer to bring new proposals from Israel.

Israeli army radio said the inner cabinet accepted a proposal by Sofaer to end deadlock in talks on handing over Taba and asked him to pass the decision to Egypt.

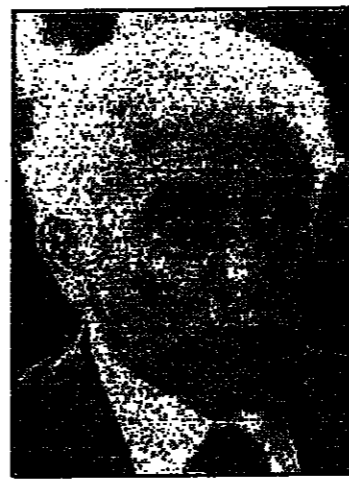
Benjedid due in Morocco next week

RABAT (R) — Algerian President Chadli Benjedid will pay a three-day state visit to neighbouring Morocco next week, the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday.

Statements issued simultaneously in Rabat and Algiers said Benjedid would arrive in Morocco Feb. 6 in what they described as a visit of "friendship and work."

It will be the first visit by an Algerian head of state to Morocco for more than 15 years.

Relations between the two states were restored last May after a rupture of 13 years caused by Algeria's support for Polisario guerrillas fighting Morocco for independence in the former



Chadli Benjedid

Spanish colony of Western Sahara.

On Tuesday, Benjedid received a telephone call from U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar who has proposed a peace plan to end the Sahara conflict, accepted in principle by both sides last August.

U.S. stand snags Security Council draft on Palestine

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Security Council members failed to reach agreement Tuesday on a statement about the situation in the Israeli-occupied territories after the United States said it should call for restraint on both sides.

The council has been working privately for more than a week, at the urging of the Palestinian U.N. observer mission, on a statement criticising tough new measures by the Israeli authorities aimed at putting down the 14-month-old Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza.

There was no immediate indication whether, in the absence of the consensus necessary for a statement, the Palestinian mission would call for a formal council meeting.

U.S. Ambassador Vernon Walters told reporters after Tuesday's consultations: "We came very close to arriving at an agreed text but we had some difficulty because it didn't call for restraint on both sides."

"We think it is important that it be a balanced document, and we did not find the document balanced. And therefore we found that we could not agree on it."

The alternate representative of the Palestinian delegation, Nasser Al Kidwa, said: "There was no agreement, unfortunately, due to the position of one member state, namely the United States. In spite of all flexibility and lengthy attempts by everybody else in the council and by us, in the observer mission of Palestine, we couldn't reach an agreement."

Soviets continue Afghan withdrawal

KABUL (Agencies) — Smiling and waving Soviet soldiers pulled out of the Afghan capital and started their journey home Wednesday, an Afghan government spokesman said.

An Interior Ministry spokesman who identified himself as Hamed said heavy shelling could be heard on the strategic Salang Highway that leads to the Soviet border.

He said the Soviet convoy gathered at the base of the Salang and moved through a checkpoint about five kilometres up the road at about 5 a.m. (0130 GMT).

He did not know how long the convoy was but he said it took 50 minutes to pass through and each truck carried from 10 to 50 soldiers.

On Tuesday, Lieutenant-General Boris Gromov, commander of the Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan, confirmed that the final convoys have been moving home but declined to say how many troops remained in Afghanistan.

When the withdrawal would be completed.

Gromov also denied U.S. allegations that the Soviets were conducting a "scorched earth" policy as their troops leave Afghanistan before a Feb. 15 deadline.

"That does not correspond with reality," he said of the accusation made Monday in Washington by Charles Redman, spokesman for the State Department.

Moscow renews offer

The Soviet Union meanwhile renewed its offer to end arms shipments to the Kabul government provided the United States halted military supplies to the rebels.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Vadim Perfilov also reaffirmed the Soviet commitment to pull out the last of its troops by Feb. 15, if not earlier, and said Moscow was ready to resume talks with the rebels.

Israelis expel 2 more from 'security zone'

RASHAYA, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli troops and allied militiamen expelled two Lebanese women from a strip they control in South Lebanon Wednesday and placed four people under house arrest, police reported.

A police spokesman said the "deportees," Ifat Nakfour and Jamila Shoucri, were expelled from Deir Mimas, a town in Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone."

He said Saeed Mansour, commander of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia in Deir Mimas, drove the two women to the Zomaraya crossing at the northeastern edge of the "security zone" at 9 a.m. (0700 GMT).

The two crossed on foot to the Bekaa Valley, said the spokesman.

The expulsion raised to 76 the overall number of "deportees" from the 10-to-16-kilometre deep "security zone" this month.

Lebanon has protested past expulsions to the U.N. Security Council.

"We were informed that we should leave our village this morning and the order was signed by Lahd himself," said Shoucri.

The two were later transferred to a Lebanese army checkpoint at Kfar Mishki, four kilometres north of the "security zone," jointly patrolled by Israeli troops and SLA militiamen.

The police spokesman said Mansour also confined four people in Deir Mimas, three women and a man, to their homes, pending interrogation in connection with an abortive attempt to assassinate the militia's commander, Antoine Lahd, three months ago.

The police official identified the women to be interrogated as Nuhad Al Ghazzi, Georgette Morcos and Malakha Mansour. He said the man is Karim Bishara.

Bishara, according to the spokesman, is a distant relative of Soha Bishara, the woman who shot and seriously wounded Lahd at his home in the border town of Marjayoun Nov. 7.

The Lebanese National Resistance Front claimed responsibility for the attempt on Lahd.

Lahd was released from a hospital in north Israel Jan. 22. He returned to the "security zone" Jan. 22.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. urges PLO to cooperate quickly

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States Tuesday urged the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to give investigators any information it had on the explosion of a Pan Am jetliner over Scotland last year in which 270 people died. Responding to reports the PLO gave the United States specific information about the involvement of the Israeli Mossad secret service in the attack, State Department spokesman Charles Redman said: "I can say very simply that's absolutely false. The PLO has provided us with no information on who is responsible for Pan Am 103. If the PLO has any information, it should provide it to the investigators immediately."

Israel names new naval chief

TEL AVIV (AP) — Brigadier-General Micha Ram has been appointed commander of the Israeli navy, the military command announced. Ram assumed the post Wednesday and promoted to the rank of major general, it said. Ram replaces Maj. Gen. Abraham Even-Shoshan.

Sudan bans British Airways flights

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan Tuesday banned British Airways (BA) from flying to Khartoum after accusing it of involvement in smuggling and illegal currency deals. The official Sudanese News Agency (SUNA) said the civil aviation authority had suspended all flights by BA and ordered its planes not to enter Sudanese air space. It did not say if the measures were permanent, and gave no details of the allegations of smuggling and illicit foreign currency deals. A British Airways spokeswoman in London said the company's Sudan manager had been called to the offices of the civil aviation authority in Khartoum to discuss "alleged contraventions of ticketing regulations. We have no knowledge of any smuggling charges." She declined to give any further details.

Gulf Air resumes Baghdad flights

BAHRAIN (AP) — The first Gulf Air flight to Baghdad in more than eight years took off from the United Arab Emirates' capital of Abu Dhabi Wednesday, marking the resumption of the voyages that were suspended because of the Gulf war. The Bahrain-based Gulf News Agency said the airline planned three flights a week to Baghdad from Abu Dhabi, Manama and Doha. Gulf Air is owned by the governments of Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and Abu Dhabi, one of the seven emirates that comprise the UAE. Its flights to the Iraqi capital were suspended shortly after the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war in September 1980.

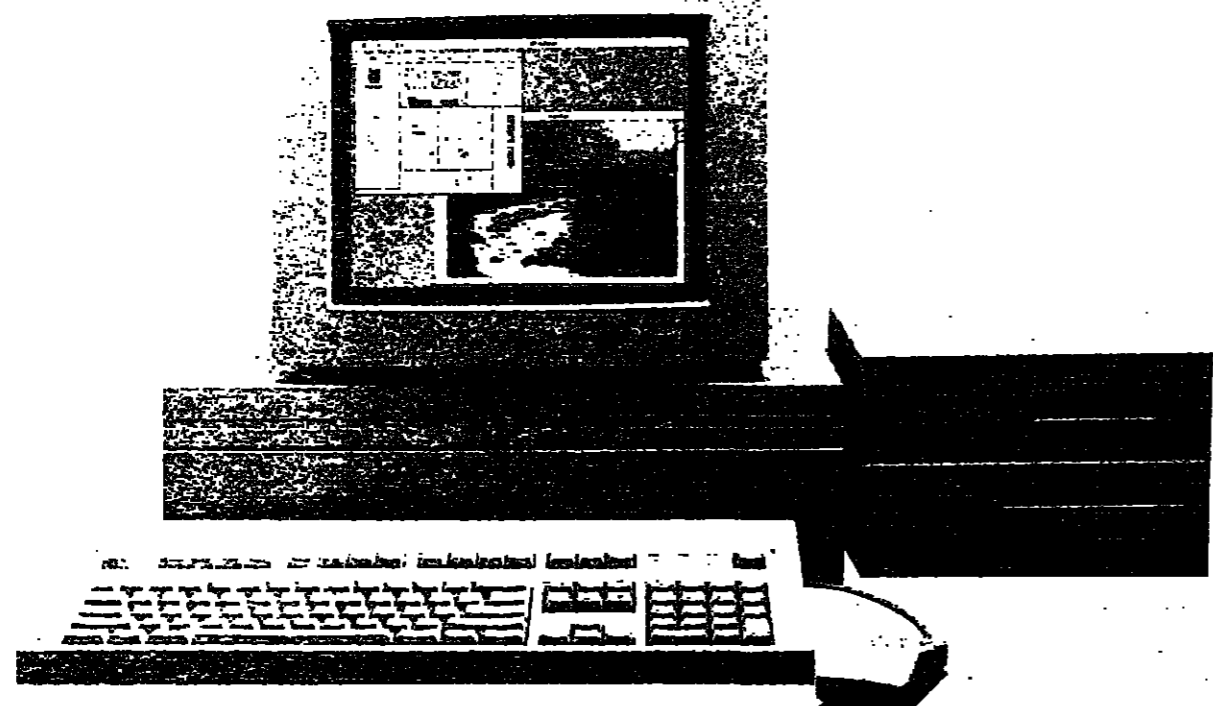
Israel admits defecting Soviet Jew

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel hopes that ties with Moscow will be unharmed by its admission of a Soviet Jewish mathematician, foreign ministry officials said Wednesday. Yaakov Kogan flew to Tel Aviv after going missing in Paris following a week-long Franco-Soviet computer seminar. He was given an Israeli entry visa by the Israeli consulate in the French capital. "We are hoping this whole affair will not hurt relations in any way," a foreign ministry spokesman said. Speaking to reporters at an immigrant absorption centre in Tel Aviv, Kogan said in broken English: "I am a Jew."

15,000 Ugandans stranded in Sudan

KAMPALA (R) — Fifteen thousand Ugandan refugees anxious to return home are stranded in southern Sudan by intensified fighting between Sudanese government troops and rebels, a senior U.N. official said Wednesday. William Young, Uganda representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said the refugees were the last of an estimated 500,000 Ugandans who fled their country after dictator Idi Amin was toppled in 1979. The majority of the refugees returned home last year. Young told Reuters that the UNHCR hoped to repatriate the 15,000 Ugandans this month if fighting between Sudanese troops and rebels

THE LATEST FROM Apple Computer



Macintosh IIX

The Macintosh IIX is the new high performance, open architecture member of the Macintosh family. Equipped with a new microprocessor of enormous power and possibilities. The Motorola 68030, combined with a 68882 co-processor, and 4 megabytes of random access memory offers an average performance improvement of 15% over the Macintosh II for most applications, and up to 200% for certain floating point calculations.

What more, using the 1.4 megabyte disk drive with an internal 80 megabytes hard disk, the Macintosh IIX extends the performance and flexibility by supporting other operating environments including MS-DOS, OS/2 and AT&T UNIX.

So, won't be an excellent idea to visit Ideal Systems and test drive the most powerful Apple Computer ever.

See the Mac IIX at our Exhibition
Special Prices will be offered during the Exhibition

IDEAL

Ideal System Co. (Pvt) Ltd.,
P.O. Box 182756, Amman, JORDAN
Tel: 676173, 676176, 675708
Tel: 21007 Fax: 672170

Apple Computer
The power to be your best.

DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Kossin
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children programmes
16:15 Local programme
17:30 Programme on Jordan
18:30 News in Arabic
18:30 Local programme
18:50 "Alph"
19:15 Health programme
19:40 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:00 Local series
21:30 Programme review
21:40 Programme on Islamic art
22:30 Arabic film
23:00 News summary in Arabic
23:10 Film (cont.)

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 La Baby Sitter
18:30 A variety programme
19:00 News in French
19:15 La vie en France
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Varieties
20:00 Bill Cosby Show
21:10 Beauty and the Beast
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film

PRAYER TIMES

06:06 Fajr
06:25 (Sunrise) Doha
11:49 Dhuhr
14:48 Asr
17:13 Maghrib
18:33 Isha

CHURCHES

Assemblies of God Church, Tel

632785, St. Joseph Church Tel. 634540, Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440, De la Salle Church Tel. 661757, Terrasanta Church Tel. 623306, Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541, Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625543, Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331, Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261, Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751, Amman International Church Tel. 685326, Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295, Rainbow Congregation Tel. 822605, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 821264

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will continue partly cloudy to cloudy with scattered showers at times. Winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy with a chance for scattered showers. Winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 17. Humidity readings: Amman 61 per cent, Aqaba 38 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Tawfiq Qab'in 623029
Dr. Khalid Akdo 795392
Dr. Tayseer Al Sa'adi 77636
Dr. George Al Fakhour 661912
Firas pharmacy 773336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 6230993
Blood Bank 775131
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 65630991
Public Security Department 656000 / 685111
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage

COMPLAINTS

Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 12
Overseas Calls 17
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 08-52000

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Akheh Maternity, J. Amn 64441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642562
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mustafy Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Asrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marja 991611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
The Sina Hospital (09)986732
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fms per kg.

Apple 500 / 450
Banana 350 / 300
Banana (Mekamari) 300 / 250
Beans 680 / 620
Broad beans 760 / 700
Cabbage 160 / 100
Carrots 240 / 200
Cauliflower 210 / 160
Cucumbers 450 / 400
Dates 600 / 500
Eggplant 190 / 120
Garlic 280 / 200
Grapefruit 190 / 120
Lemon 250 / 200
Lentils (per one) 120 / 100
Marrow (large) 380 / 320
Marrow (small) 500 / 400
Orange (Shamouti) 350 / 300
Orange (local) 360 / 300
Onion (dry) 220 / 160
Onion (green) 240 / 200
Pepper (hot) 540 / 500
Pepper (sweet) 450 / 400
Potato 150 / 100
Spinach 300 / 250
Tomatoes 210 / 160

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEE ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:10 Aqaba (RJ)
09:10 Damascus (RJ)
09:15 Jeddah (RJ)
09:30 Cairo (RJ)
09:35 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:55 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:00 Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
10:00 Calcutta (RJ)
10:00 Laraca, Athens (RJ)
10:00 London, Geneva (RJ)
10:10 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
10:30 Bangkok (RJ)
10:30 Riyadh (SV)
10:30 Muscat, Bahrain (RJ)
10:45 Tripoli (RJ)
10:50 Rome (RJ)
00:20 Baghdad (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:10 Kuwait (TU)
12:10 Baghdad (IA)
13:30 Muscat, Bahrain (RJ)
13:45 Kuwait (KU)
14:30 Dhahran (RJ)
15:00 Riyadh (SV)
15:00 Muscat, Bahrain (RJ)
15:00 Baghdad (IA)
15:30 Paris (AF)
15:30 Amsterdam, Istanbul (KL)
19:15 Frankfurt (LH)
20:00 Zurich, Laraca (SR)
00:25 London, Cairo (BA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:55 Aqaba (RJ)
10:00 Tripoli (RJ)
10:05 Rome (RJ)
10:10 Laraca, Athens (RJ)
10:15 Paris (RJ)
10:25 Frankfurt, London (RJ)
10:30 Baghdad (RJ)
10:35 Abu Dhabi, Kuwait (RJ)
10:45 Vienna, Miami (RJ)
10:50 Jeddah (RJ)
10:50 Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
11:00 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
11:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
11:30 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
12:00 Bangkok (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:20 Damascus, Frankfurt (LH)
12:10 Tunis (TU)
12:10 New in Arabic
15:00 Kuwait (KU)
15:30 Ankara, Istanbul (TK)
15:30 Riyadh (SV)
19:35 Cairo (MS)
20:05 Sana'a (LH)
01:30 Baghdad (IA)

FOR FRIDAY

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

05:00 Kossin
05:00 Religious programme
05:00 Friday's prayer
11:30 Sports programme
12:30 The world around us
12:30 Message from Oman
12:30 Arabic series
12:30 News in Arabic
12:30 Local programme
12:30 Programme review
12:30 News in Arabic
12:30 Arabic series
12:30 Local programme
12:30 News summary in Arabic
12:30 Programme (cont.)

PROGRAMME TWO

17:15 Children cartoons
17:30 French feature film
19:00 News in French
19:00 Documentary
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:00 News in Arabic
19:00 Charles in Charge
19:00 This Air
19:00 News in English
19:00 Follow Green
19:00 Three's Company

PRAYER TIMES

05:06 Fajr
06:25 (Sunrise) Doha
11:49 Dhuhr
14:48 Asr
17:13 Maghrib
18:33 Isha

Jordan Valley Committee adopts recommendations to establish touristic sites

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Valley Committee Wednesday adopted a series of recommendations aimed at dealing with issues pertaining to the protection of the environment and establishing touristic areas in the valley.

The meeting, in which Her Majesty Queen Noor participated, was held at Wadi Al Arab Dam.

Participants proposed solutions to several problems such as pest control, treatment of natural fertilisers and plastic waste, as well as establishing national parks and health facilities for picnickers and hikers.



H.M. Queen Noor

The committee also agreed to adopt a recommendation to establish a general health safety committee for the Jordan Valley, which would undertake the responsibility of co-ordination between the different concerned ministries.

The proposed committee would identify problems, study possible solutions and suggest executive measures which could be implemented by the private and public sector. The committee would also work on creating awareness among the public on the actual nature of the problems facing the valley.

The meeting was attended by the ministers of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, Water and Irrigation, Public Works and Housing and Tourism.

Earlier, Her Majesty inspected and planted trees at the national park established by Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) on the banks of Wadi Al Arab Dam. The project is part of a greater development plan drawn out by the Jordan Valley Committee for the area.

The Jordan Valley Committee was formed on Jan. 1, 1988, upon the initiative of Queen Noor and comprises of a number of private and public members.

Also present at Wadi Al Arab meeting were the governors of Balqa and Irbid, mayors and district governors of Deir Alla, South and North Shouneh, as well as the secretaries general of JVA, public works and tourism and members of the private sector.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

LAWZI MEETS ARAB YOUTH: Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi Wednesday met with members of the Arab Youth Forum. He reviewed Jordan's history since its establishment in 1921 and said that Jordan, under the Hashemite leadership, made strenuous efforts to unify Arab ranks. Lawzi also referred to the Palestinian people's uprising and the Israeli occupation authorities' violations of human rights. A number of senior officials attended the meeting. (Petra)

DAJANI VISITS AMMAN GOVERNORATE: Interior Minister Rajid Dajani Wednesday visited the Amman Governorate and discussed with Governor Mohammad Ali Al Amin administrative matters related to the services given to citizens. Dajani was also briefed with the computer department. (Petra)

MAJALI BECOMES COURT ADVISOR: The council of ministers Wednesday decided to second Nasouh Al Majali, the adviser at the prime ministry, to the post of information advisor at the Royal Hashemite Court. (Petra)

LECLERCQ VISITS UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN: French Ambassador in Amman Patrick Leclercq Wednesday visited the University of Jordan and met with a number of students. He praised the relations between the Jordanian and French peoples and explained France's positions toward the current events in the region. (Petra)

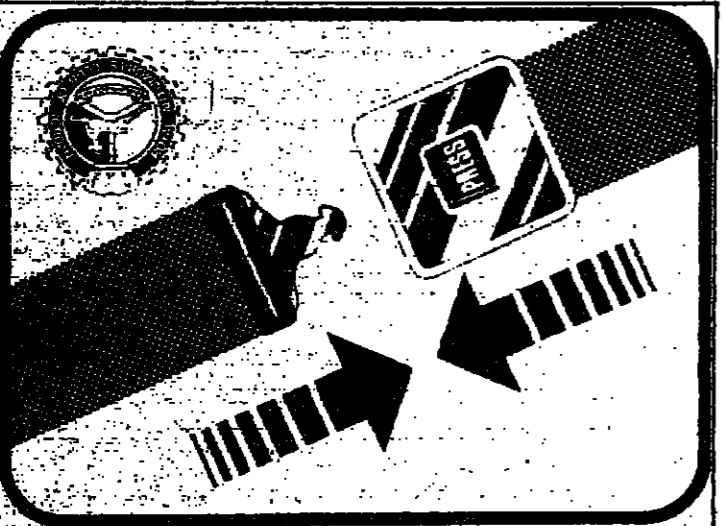
Sinai governor briefed on Aqaba development

AMMAN (J.T.) — Governor of southern Sinai, Mohammed Nouredin Afifi, who arrived here Tuesday on a visit, met Wednesday with Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) President Basam Qaqish and heard a briefing on development projects in the Aqaba region.

Afifi toured military positions in southern Jordan and was acquainted with the situation along the frontiers.

Afifi is accompanied by an Egyptian folk group which will present performances in Aqaba and will tour archaeological sites at the ancient Nabatean city of Petra.

The group will also present another performance at Mut'a University near Karak and will tour the Karak region.



RAC launches campaign for use of seatbelts

AMMAN (J.T.) — In conjunction with the newly reintroduced seatbelt legislation for cars, the Royal Automobile Club (RAC) has been publicizing the benefits of using seatbelts for the past several months. Among activities that have been carried out are the erection of large road-side signs on all main highways, the distribution of over 25,000 coloured leaflets and the recent distribution of dashboard and windshield plastic stickers which remind drivers and front seat passengers to use their seatbelts. It is worth noting that the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan was instrumental in helping to formulate the original seatbelt regulations in 1984.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

* The Jordanian Plastic Art season which includes a general exhibition of works by Jordanian artists at the Professional Association Complex in Irbid.

FILM

* A feature film entitled "On Golden Pond" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.

CONCERT

* A festival of rock music by the Sun Rhythms Section at the Palace of Culture of Al Hussein Youth City (Friday) — 7:00 p.m.

Crown Prince invited to take part in meeting of Islamic intellectuals

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday received an invitation to take part in the first meeting by a group of intellectuals from South East Asia to be held in Malaysia to discuss issues of concern to the Islamic World.

The invitation was conveyed to the Crown Prince at a meeting in his office with visiting Malaysian Army Chief of Staff Tan Sri Hashem. Prince Hassan paid tribute to the strong relations between Jordan and Malaysia and called for further cooperation between nations in South East Asia and Arab countries in economic, developmental and technological fields.

Prince Hassan referred with satisfaction to experience and expertise gained by Jordan and Malaysia in the field of long-term development planning.

The Malaysian guest voiced his admiration of Jordan's achievements and the high standards of its armed forces.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan

2 more AIDS cases discovered

By Abdullah Nsour
Al Ra'i Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two more Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) cases have been discovered in Jordan, raising to 22 the total number of patients suffering from the dangerous disease in the Kingdom.

A Health Ministry official said that one of the newly discovered patients contracted the disease through blood transfusion while the other was infected after receiving blood products while undergoing treatment abroad.

So far only three AIDS pa-

tients died of the disease in Jordan, according to the spokesman.

The last time the Ministry of Health announced the discovery of AIDS cases was last month when it was known that three patients were added to the list.

Of the three patients, two had contracted AIDS through blood transfusion, and blood products, while one was infected through sexual contact, all prior to 1986.

According to the spokesman the Ministry of Health has been launching campaigns to spread awareness among the public against the disease and ways to protect themselves from infection.

In 1987 the ministry announced the formation of a national committee charged with taking preventive measures to stem the spread of the killer disease by providing information to the public and by introducing measures at hospitals and blood banks.

The Health Ministry screens all amounts of donated blood, does not as a rule import blood or blood products without the proper certificate that they are AIDS-free and conducts additional tests on any amounts of imported blood in a bid to stem the spread of the disease.

Jordan, Palestine discuss flow of agricultural goods from West Bank

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — Means of facilitating the flow of agricultural products from the occupied West Bank to Arab countries through Jordanian territory was discussed Wednesday by Minister of Industry and Trade Hamdi Tabbaa and the director of the economic and planning department at the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Abdul Razzak Al Yahya.

The two officials discussed cooperation in this matter to facilitate the passage of these products particularly citrus fruit, olive oil and olives.

Jordan has since 1967 granted the Palestinian fruit and vegetable growers facilities to market their products in Jordan and the other Arab states.

Also Wednesday, Tabbaa met Tunisian Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Munji Lahbib to re-

view Jordanian-Tunisian economic cooperation and trade links. They also discussed arrangements for convening the joint Jordanian-Tunisian economic committee in Amman in the first half of 1989 under the co-chairmanship of ministers of industry and trade from both countries.

According to an earlier statement, the Jordanian fair in Tunis will be allowed to sell \$2.5 million worth of products directly to the public, and Tunisia will be treated on equal footing during the Tunisian industrial fair in April.

The announcement about the industrial fairs were made during a visit here by a Tunisian delegation last month. Tabbaa also had a meeting

here Wednesday with Qatari Ambassador Mubarak Nasser Quwari to discuss means of encouraging Qatari businessmen and companies to invest in Jordan.

The prospect of launching Jordanian-Qatari ventures, exports of Jordanian agricultural and industrial products to Qatar and attracting Qatari tourists to Jordan in the summer, were among the other topics discussed at the meeting.

Joint company to set up detergent plant in Iraq

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The Iraq-Jordan Industry Company (IJIC) has taken steps to set up a detergent plant in Baghdad which will produce nearly 60,000 tonnes of detergent products annually, according to an announcement by the Ministry of Industry and Trade's Secretary General Mohammad Saqqaf.

Saqqaf said that the project, which will be carried out with an initial capital of eight million Iraqi dinars, will be the first enterprise by the joint company which plans to carry out other projects in Iraq and Jordan.

The IJIC will own 40 per cent of the company shares and will offer 30 per cent of the total shares for sale to the public in Iraq and Jordan, Saqqaf said.

He urged Jordanian citizens and organisations to buy the company shares which he expected to yield no less than 15 per cent dividends annually.

The IJIC has now announced a tender for the construction of the plant, and consultancy firms have started studying the tenders and submitting bids, according to Sa-

qqaf. He expected work on the plant to start in the coming month.

Once the plant has become operational, products will be marketed partly in Iraq and partly by companies operating in the Arab region, Saqqaf noted.

He said that the plant will enjoy certain privileges which include exemptions of tax on its profits for six years and the equipment and machinery will be exempted from customs duty.

In addition, primary materials used in the manufacture of the detergents and the finished products will also be exempted from any duty when marketed in Jordan and Iraq, Saqqaf pointed out.

Saqqaf said that the company will give priority in the purchase

of equipment and other materials for the plant to Iraqi and Jordanian producers.

According to Saqqaf, Feb. 16 has been fixed as a deadline for the sale of all the company shares.

He also announced that the IJIC is now studying setting up plants in Jordan for timber processing and producing packaging materials. The study is expected to be completed during the first half of 1989 after which steps will be taken for the implementation of the project, Saqqaf added.

The Baghdad-based IJIC was established in 1985 with a capital of 20 million Iraqi dinars.

In December 1988, Jordan and Iraq agreed to step up economic and technical cooperation and to take further steps to achieve economic and industrial integration.

Under an agreement signed in Baghdad, the two countries decided to increase their 1989 trade exchanges to \$800 million and to expand bilateral cooperation in energy, industry and mineral exploration.

Permanent exhibition to open at Sahab

AMMAN (J.T.) — A permanent exhibition of Jordanian industries is due to open at the Sahab Industrial City (SIC) in the first half of February; and increasing numbers of industrial concerns and other businesses are applying to the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) for pavilions at the site, according to a statement Wednesday.

The statement issued by the JIEC which is organising the exhibition said that the site can accommodate pavilions for 350 companies wishing to display their products for the public to encourage the sale of national products.

JIEC Director General Fayez Suheimat had said that the SIC now houses 140 industries with an overall capital of JD 67 million, providing jobs for 4,000 people.

Factories set up at Sahab, Suheimat pointed out, are for food, electrical appliances, plastic, leather and rubber products, chemical and textile industries,

furniture, paper and medicine among others.

In his statement last month Suheimat said that in 1988 SIC witnessed the start of 57 industries against six in 1982 which encouraged the JIEC to embark on implementing the second phase of the SIC project.

Suheimat also announced that the JIEC plans to establish industrial cities in Salt, Karak and Tafleh in view of the increased demand on industries in the Kingdom.

SSC opens new branch at Sahab

Meanwhile, the Social Security Corporation (SSC) Wednesday opened a new branch at the SIC at a ceremony attended by Minister of Labour Marwan Dudin, officials and leading businessmen.

SSC Director General Mahdi Al Farhan delivered a speech at

the ceremony pointing out that the branch was needed to facilitate services to the public and in particular the various businesses at the SIC.

The SSC provides services to all those covered by its law and beneficiaries normally include employees and workers at the various industrial concerns and factories.

The SSC, according to Farhan, opened branches in other parts of Amman, Zarqa, Karak, Salt, Mafraq and Tafleh in the past two years and other branches in Irbid and Aqaba sometime earlier.

Farhan said that the SSC now covers nearly half a million workers employed by public and private companies and institutions working for 6,000 organisations and companies in the Kingdom.

The new branch in SIC, he said, will provide services to 50,000 workers in 1,100 companies and institutions.

Jordan reaches advanced stage in solving infertility cases — Bataineh

By Suhair Obaidat
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian doctors have made major strides in mastering the art of in vitro fertilisation and are ready to offer their services in solving infertility cases in the Kingdom on parity with developed countries in this particular field of medicine, according to the head of the King Hussein Medical Centre.

"Though it is a fairly new field, the Royal Medical Services (RMS) felt the need to introduce the in vitro fertilisation method (the process of test tube babies) to its beneficiaries with infertility problems," Dr. Aref Bataineh said at a press conference Wednesday.

Bataineh said although the Jordanian population growth rate was one of the highest in the world (3.6 per cent), infertility problems were still a major social problem. "We try to help these families in overcoming their problems since they cannot have babies," Bataineh said.

"Before we started this project in 1987, many people with infertility problems went abroad to receive medication, either at their expense or the government's, which burdened the citizens and the treasury with huge amounts of money. So we thought about creating a special unit to deal with such cases," he added.

He said extensive communication has been carried out with the Howard and Georgeanna Jones Institute for Reproductive Medicine which is affiliated with Eastern Virginia Medical School. The institute was the first to be established in the United States for this purpose and is considered the central scientific and training centre for other similar clinics, according to Bataineh.

In 1987, the RMS signed an agreement with this centre to train the required staff. A representative of the U.S. centre came to Jordan to select a seven-person team. The team consisted of three doctors, two biologists, a biochemist and an operating room nurse, who were trained for six months.

The RMS funded the JD 350,000 project which took off in 1988, extending free services to its beneficiaries and those covered by the civil and military health insurance schemes. For other citizens, the cost amounts to only JD 450 for the first attempt and is reduced each time the process is repeated. In other world centres the cost is no less than \$10,000, Bataineh said.

Bataineh said that out of the 79 cases handled at the RMS centre, 13 completed their pregnancy, seven of them are on-going pregnancies and six had aborted — a rate, he believes, compares favourably with success rates in centres around the world, which reach 30 per cent.

riosis (presence of endometrial tissue outside the uterine cavity) in addition to immunological factors. On the male side, the unit deals with cases of oligospermia (low count of sperm) and unexplained infertility.

"The country's legislation did not prohibit treatment in that manner since it (in vitro fertilisation) does not contradict Islamic Law which makes it a condition that the source of the egg and the sperm be the husband and wife,"

Bataineh said. Adding that in their practice, doctors adhere to what the Sharia allows.

Bataineh stressed that the success of such a process drew heavily on team work among qualified, trained and specialised technicians. He added that future projects at the centre include fertilisation inside the body rather than in special incubators so that the fetus may grow in its natural environment as in normal pregnancy cases.

Every Saturday night.

NEPTUNE'S NIGHT

FRESH FISH & SHELL FISH FROM SEAS

UNCOMPARABLE MEALS SERVED IN A RELAXED PIANO ATMOSPHERE

9 JD per person.

Please Reserve In Advance
Tel: 08/51000

(مساء كل يوم سبت)

ليالي نبتون

تشكيلة من الأسماك الطازجة وجبة غنية من خيرات البحار تقدم في أجواء ممتعة

٩ دينار للشخص الواحد يرجى الحجز مسبقا هاتف ٥١٠٠٠ (٠٨)

SELECTION OF HORS D'OEUVRES

SHRIMPS COCKTAIL OR SMOKED SALMON

LOBSTER BISQUE (SOUP)

A CHOICE OF GRILLED SEA FOOD BROCHETTE OR OVEN BAKED SEABASS IN -SALSA HARRA- OR DEEP FRIED -ARABIAN GULF- SHALLOW WATER FISH OR LOBSTER TAIL WITH JUMBO SHRIMP

VEGETABLE GRATIN

GATEWAY DELICACIES FROM TROLLEY.

الغيتواي
GATEWAY HOTEL



The six members of the group Sun Rhythm Section

Sun Rhythm Section to perform in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Noor Al Hussein Foundation's (NHF) National Music Conservatory (NMC) will on Friday present a festival of rock music performed by the "Sun Rhythm Section."

The festival, which has been organised in cooperation with the American Centre, will be held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Bin Al Hussein and Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Al Faisal.

Proceeds of the festival — which will be held at the Palace of Culture of Al Hussein Youth City and a similar one on the following day to be held at Yarmouk University — will benefit the NMC's scholarship fund.

The Sun Rhythm Section consists of six musicians who, in the early 1950s originated "rockabilly" music and worked with such artists as Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Roy Orbison, Warren Smith and other great musicians.

musicians from Jordan, the United States, Austria and Spain among other countries.

The NMC was inaugurated in October 1986 by Her Majesty Queen Noor, who is particularly interested in the development of a national music programme in Jordan.

The conservatory started with a modest violin programme attended by 45 students aged 6-16, and now, in its third year, offers instruction to 162 students by 21 teachers in string, brass and woodwinds instruments, in addition to the instruments of Arabic music, which was introduced this year, as well as music theory and appreciation.

The conservatory organised training courses for school teachers in the utilisation of music in enhancing the teaching process.

It also organised a music summer camp attended by 125 children aged 3-16.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

جورن التيمز يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

Editorial Director:

RAKAN AL MAJALI

Director General:

DR. RADI AL WAQFI

Editor-in-Chief:

DR. WALEED M. SADI

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171-6, 670141-4, 684311, 684366

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times Advertising Department.

Where are the Soviets?

THERE is something notably missing in the flurry of political movement in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Several foreign high-level dignitaries have visited the Middle East region and left their foot prints on the path that may lead to the much talked about international peace conference. The region has yet to receive a very high Soviet official on par with the level of Western representation that the countries of the Middle East have gotten used to of late. That is why all the eyes are focusing on the projected visit to the area by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in spring. Needless to say the roads that may lead to the international peace conference cannot be enough without the one that originates in Moscow.

Until the Soviet role in the Middle East equation becomes clearer and firmer, there would remain a lot to talk about before the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict reach their common destiny. It is interesting, if not perplexing, to watch the Soviet Union maintain such an intriguing low profile in the on-going events in the Middle East. The Soviet silence is so remarkable that it may suggest that, according to the Soviet timetable, time is not yet ripe for the final touches to be put on the idea of holding the Middle East conference. Moscow must still be waiting for some additional developments that would warrant its intervention. Can it be that the policy-makers in the Soviet Union believe that the Middle Eastern pot still needs some more ingredients before it becomes ready for consumption? This and other questions on the minds of the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict cannot be answered until the Soviet Union begins to move and flex its political muscles in the region. The final touches to the preparatory work that is being done nowadays to convene the anticipated international conference, therefore, cannot be had till the Soviet foreign minister makes his overdue pilgrimage to the region. For as long as the Soviet player continues to stay away from the field, the ball game will neither start nor end. But Soviet aloofness, so far, is characteristic of Soviet patience. Whereas the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict are understandably impatient to get things moving, there is some solace in the Soviet patience in that when it ends things in the region might really get rolling again.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i daily newspaper Wednesday launched an attack on Israel's media which it described as an ostrich trying to hide Israeli leaders' aggressive policies through propaganda campaigns against others. The paper said that the Israeli media had earlier tried to put about hostile rumours against the Jordanian economy, and failed; and is now trying the same game again in response to Jordanian media's exposure of Israel's deteriorating economy. There is no doubt that this attitude on the part of the Israeli media which reflects official government policies stems from a frustration and failure on the domestic front due to a weak economy and the on-going uprising in Palestine which the Israelis have proved unable to put down, the paper noted. Instead of dealing with the root causes of this difficult internal situation which resulted from confrontation with the Palestinians, continued armament and continued settlement-building, the Israelis are again trying to play the same old game, hoping to divert public attention from the difficult situation on the domestic front, the paper pointed out. It said that unlike Israel, Jordan is now enjoying a rejuvenated economy despite the past difficulties, and is building a peace economy not a war economy which normally involves heavy burdens and entails many hardships. The media campaigns which are full of falsehoods in Israel and the Israeli government's desperate moves, the paper concluded, can never help to solve the Jewish state's problems.

The editor of Al Ra'i daily tackles the attitude of the United States with regard to the PLO and the Palestine issue. Rakan Majali says that the PLO has offered all that it can for the sake of attaining a peaceful settlement and, therefore, there is no more chance for more compromise no matter what manoeuvres are being employed by the United States and regardless of the different forms of blackmail being exercised by Washington on the organisation. The PLO has won world-wide support for its new policies, and for its latest declaration in which it gave recognition to U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, the writer adds. In any negotiations, both parties normally submit their views with the most extreme demands which can be softened down during the talks, the writer points out. He says that the PLO has already reached the minimum demand after offering many compromise to the Americans and the Israelis for the sake of reaching a lasting settlement. What the Palestinians want, he concludes, is an independent state and the implementation of resolutions that can ensure a withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied lands.

Al Dastour daily newspaper said that Israel seems unable to rid itself of the old policies which tend to bind the hands of its leaders. The Israelis continue to maintain an iron fist policy and atrocities in the occupied Arab territories, while the Palestinian uprising is being escalated one day after another, the paper noted. It said that the leaders of the Israeli government continue to show the world their obstinacy and their intransigence while deep down they feel really frustrated over their failure to quell the uprising and to improve the internal situation in Israel. Furthermore, the paper said, the Israelis are in deep disarray due to disputes among their leaders and due to a total isolation from the rest of the world. It added that these attitudes and positions can be clearly discerned from the various, and sometimes, conflicting statements by Zionist leaders and government members in Israel.

Sawt Al Shaab daily for its part takes up the question of bolstering inter-Arab solidarity and King Hussein's role in achieving that goal. The paper refers to the King's telephone conversation with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad on Tuesday as part of the King's endeavours in this connection. The Arab masses are optimistic over continued consultations and coordination of policies among Arab heads of state since they view this practice as leading towards joint action that can be of benefit to the whole Arab Nation, the paper noted. The paper said that such contacts should essentially lead to an Arab summit meeting where all the heads of state can deal with common issues.

Morals, ethics propel Nordic role

By P.V. Vivekanand

IT IS refreshing to see the Nordic countries taking more than a casual interest in efforts for peace in the Middle East in the wake of the emergence of the new moderate Palestinian position. Even the Netherlands, a traditionally staunch supporter of Israel, has upgraded its contacts with the PLO and conservative Denmark has invited PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat for an official visit. The Hague also hosted a peace seminar bringing together PLO officials and Israeli peace activists and let its foreign minister address the gathering. It is well known now that Swedish leaders were involved in an eight-month long effort in finding some common ground between the PLO and the United States as a prelude to formal contacts between the two sides. Finland invited Arafat and upgraded the PLO mission in Helsinki. Norway sent its foreign minister to Tunis to meet the PLO chairman and promised to do all it could to advance the search for Middle East peace.

From a general point of view, the Nordic involvement adds weight to the role the European Economic Community (EEC) seeks to play in the peace process. But a marked difference lies in the fundamentals that guide the policies that the Nordic states and the rest of the Western Europeans follow in the Middle East. While, for the most part, the EEC policy in the Middle East derives from political and economic considerations, the Scandinavians base their moves on more moralistic and ethical grounds rather than geopolitical imperatives. That would perhaps explain the often love-hate relationship between the Nordic countries — with the exception until now of the Netherlands — and Israel. The Nordic states are fully committed to the secure existence of Israel but this does not mean they condone everything that the Zionist state does on the pretext of "security."

In the words of Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek, "we are very much behind Israel... We are not prepared to give in one millimetre as far as the secure existence of Israel is concerned... but there is another side to the medal, the Palestinian right to self-determination. These two elements have to be reconciled." One would wish these words were said much earlier, but then let's not overlook that the ground was not exactly set for such a development.

At the same time, it is not clear yet whether the EEC or the Nordics are solid on the idea of an independent Palestinian state, an inevitable element in a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. But then, the Dutch or Danes need no reminder how it feels like to be under the yoke of foreign military occupation, denied all forms of self-expression and subjected to all kinds of degrading treatment at the hands of the occupying power. They should be the first to come forth and uphold the principle of the right of all people to statehood and freedom.

The question that comes up now is: Do the Nordic countries have the political clout to pressure Israel into steering its course into moderate grounds and accepting that it cannot hope for its own "security" as long as the Palestinians are not granted their legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination?

Given the personal animosity between the Nordic people and some of today's Israeli leaders — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir included — it is difficult to see official Nordic-Israeli interaction at this point in time. For instance, how can one expect the prime minister of Sweden to sit down and talk business with Shamir, whose hands are stained with the blood of Swedish mediator Count Folke Bernadotte? Let's not overlook the fact that for a long time Swedish diplomats in Israel stayed away from attending

all formal functions featuring Shamir, as recently as the formal assumption of office by the former leader of the terrorist Stern gang. For that matter, can Norway forget its Major Karl van Horn who was the target of a very convenient accident when he was about to expose Zionist sleight and blackmail and extortion of United Nations officials? Or that Oslo is getting nowhere with its probe into the whereabouts of the heavy water it supplied to Israel?

Perhaps, the key lies in contacts between the centre-of-the-road parties and leftist groups in Israel and their counterparts in the Nordic states. The weight of the Nordic parties thrown behind peace-seeking elements in Israel will indeed have a major impact on the domestic Israeli political scene, particularly in light of the known Nordic stand on the security and stability of the Zionist state. The Nordics are in a better position to address Israeli public opinion and instil the realisation that today's leadership in Israel could only lead the country to further instability and insecurity by hanging on to the time-rejected concept that military might is the answer to everything.

A definite trend along these lines already appears to have taken shape at the peace seminar hosted at the Hague this week. The central theme of the message that van den Broek delivered at the forum was simple: It's high time Israelis and Palestinians got together and came up with a just and comprehensive formula that satisfies the aspirations and interests of both people and based on co-existence and security and stability for all. The PLO has already accepted this principle, but did the message manage to penetrate the deaf ears of the Israeli leaders? Or, will it ever?

The writer is the political editor of the Jordan Times



Malta's identity crisis

By Barry Moody
Reuters

VALLETTA — Malta is performing a delicate balancing act between its commitment to a European identity and the constraints of its geographic position only 200 miles from African shores.

The 20-month-old government of Prime Minister Edward Fenech Adami has moved quickly to distance itself from the pro-Libyan image of the Labour Party which ruled Malta for 16 years until 1987 and whose policies sometimes hurt relations with the United States.

But at the same time as emphasising a European identity — it plans to apply for membership of the European Community (EC) — the small island nation has made clear that it will not give up its commercial ties to Libya, one of the few countries with which it has a favourable trade balance. Fenech Adami told Reuters in an interview that the previous government was seen as subservient to Libya while his administration wanted a correct relationship. "Any undue Libyan influence is non-existent in Malta," he said.

But he said it would be "stupid" for Malta to deny its Mediterranean position or its proximity to Libya and the rest of North Africa. "Our foreign policy is extremely clear. Malta is Western oriented, Malta is a democracy... that is no reason why we should not also have a good working relationship with all neighbouring countries," he said.

Diplomats in Valletta say Fenech Adami's efforts to re-establish Malta's pro-Western credentials have involved delicate diplomacy, especially at the time of the shooting down of two Libyan MiGs by U.S. navy fighters earlier this month, which caused deep concern here. "This government believes a policy of intimidation of Libya is counterproductive. It thinks if Libya is cornered it becomes more dangerous," one Western diplomat said.

"Malta does not believe in this kind of action but does not want to say so strongly for fear of ruining its new pro-Western image and the way it has distanced itself from Libya. It cannot shed the wrong signals and waste 18 months' work," the diplomat said. In an address to diplomats earlier this month Fenech Adami was typically careful to display an even-handed stance.

In a clear reference to the shooting down of the MiGs and U.S. allegations that Libya is building a chemical warfare plant, the prime minister said Malta strongly opposed threats or use of force to resolve conflicts.

But he added: "We do not easily accept as true, accusations levelled by one country against another. Nevertheless we understand and share the

apprehensiveness of any country when it knows about or even suspects the existence of sources of danger, especially nearby."

Malta's need to maintain good relations with Libya is based not only on geographic but also on economic factors.

More than 500 Maltese work in Libya while Libyan companies are big employers in Malta itself. Up to 10 per cent of the island's work force is estimated to be employed by Libya.

Seventy per cent of Malta's trade is with the EC but imports far outweigh exports. In contrast, there is a healthy surplus with Tripoli.

Western diplomats acknowledge that Malta cannot turn completely westwards, ignoring its geographical location.

One said: "This government's relationship with Libya is an obligatory choice for geographical reasons... it is a natural arrangement."

The prime minister has complained at the slowness with which the West has reacted to his government's new policies.

As soon as it came to power, the new government told Libya that military clauses of a 1984 agreement between the two countries were a dead letter.

One such clause was invoked by then Prime Minister Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici to warn Libya of an imminent U.S. air raid in 1986, further damaging already rocky relations with Washington.

Government officials say Malta could not revoke all the arrangements signed with Tripoli without undermining Valletta's international credibility.

This is one reason why it went ahead with a joint Maltese-Libyan radio station on the island. But when the Libyans began broadcasts last September with an attack on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Malta threatened to close down the station. It now insists on vetting Arabic broadcasts in advance.

Officials say the joint radio replaced plans for a wholly Libyan controlled station on Malta over which the government had no control.

Malta's vulnerability to tension in the Mediterranean is greater because of its almost total lack of defences or surveillance of its coastline — a sharp contrast to the ancient fortresses all over the island built by the crusading knights of St. John who turned Malta into a bastion against the Ottoman Turks.

Fenech Adami says he intends to step up measures to guard against drug and other smuggling as well as security risks.

More than 700,000 tourists a year visit Malta, more than half of them British, and it is recognised that anti-hijacking measures must be strengthened.

But officials say they are unhappy with the reaction of Western countries to Maltese requests for help in improving the island's defences.

Israeli army concedes defeat

By Joel Brinkley

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — After 408 days, 6,000 arrests, at least 361 deaths and many thousands of injuries, the Palestinian uprising still rumbles steadily along, barely deterred by Israel's ever-changing tactics for suppressing it. But now for the first time, Israeli army officers as well as other leading officials are acknowledging with frustration and despair that nothing they can do will end it.

The army battled a record number of violent incidents in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the month ending Jan. 9. The period saw 2,790 such clashes between Palestinians and soldiers. 60 per cent more than in the month before. The number of Palestinians killed was 26, a number equal to that recorded in the uprising's first violent days. The resistance has not flagged despite the recent Israeli decisions to use steel and rubber bullets that harm instead of merely sting, to increase the use of plastic bullets that can injure or kill, and to widen the judicial and monetary penalties against demonstrators.

Last week the Israeli press quoted army officers as saying privately that they could see no end to the violence, no matter what the army did. The officers predicted with more than a little gloom that the army will be fighting the Palestinians this time next year, and perhaps the year after that, unless a political solution is found. Despite an improved environment for negotiation — the Palestine Liberation Organisation has shown evidence of a conciliatory attitude — in Israel, movement toward peace still seems a long way off. And so the uprising rolls along.

"There's no question here of damaging the foundation," Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin told a parliament committee discussing the uprising. "If we arrest 4,000 people, we won't be rid of the problem because if there really is a command that you'll arrest, another will arise, and a third. This is a clash with a wide public."

The defence minister also admitted that two of Israel's weapons against Palestinians — deportation of leaders and the demolition of homes — were no longer proving useful as deterrents.

Last week, Deputy Chief of Staff Ehud Barak said, "We can gradually, over a long period of time, reduce the level of violence. But we shouldn't think in terms of days, weeks, months."

By Adrian Holloway

LONDON — Come 1992, it will be party-time in Europe when the continent becomes one big market with 320 million consumers and few restrictions. But one of the principal guests just won't enter into the party spirit. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has been hailed as the great Euroskeptic.

In 1985, the 12 members of the European Community voted to eliminate all trade, tariff and financial barriers within the community. A white paper followed, which all 12 governments voted into law.

The plans for 1992, championed by Jacques Delors, the French president of the European Commission, have drawn some characteristically sharp words from Mrs. Thatcher. She has opposed Britain and other community states embracing the European Monetary System's exchange rate mechanism, obligatory alignment of European rates of value-added tax and the abolition of border posts, and derided the idea of a monetary union and a European central bank.

And why not? Mrs. Thatcher is not expected by the British people to behave in a fervently European way. Traditionally, Britain has taken pride in its status as an island and preferred to remain in "splendid isolation" while being wary of its continental neighbours.

Britain's early difficulties in dealing with the EEC served only to augment British suspicion of things European. Mrs. Thatcher's reputation as the spoiler reached new heights after her speech at a European gathering in Bruges, Belgium, last September. She poured scorn on the political changes that would accompany the freeing of markets and promotion of enterprise in Europe. Mrs. Thatcher is all for freer markets and enterprise, but what really grates with her about 1992 are its socialist and collectivist overtones.

The outcome of 1992 will indeed have a "social dimension."

Although market forces will be let loose as restrictions are removed, positive regional policies and new labour laws will accompany them. Centralised health, safety and holiday programmes for workers would characterise a progressive dialogue between workers, unions and employers. Jacques Delors received something bordering on a hero's welcome when he addressed the British Trade Unions Conference in September. After nearly a decade of Thatcherite legislation aimed at weakening trade union powers, Delors' "social dimension" has provided fresh hope for Britain's beleaguered trade unions.

But, the prime minister won't have any of it. "We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain," she said, "only to see them re-imposed at a European level."

It is ironic, Mrs. Thatcher added, "that just when those countries such as the Soviet Union, which have tried to run everything from the centre, are learning that success depends on dispensing power and decisions away from the centre, some in the community seem to want to move in the opposite direction."

The EMS exchange rate mechanism, one of Mrs. Thatcher's main targets, would limit independent fiscal action by the British government. With the prospect of pound sterling tied to other European currencies, many in the City of London, the financial district, are concerned that the British pound will become overshadowed by the West German mark and the French franc.

However, conservatives from Mrs. Thatcher's ruling party are at pains to point out the "positive" aspects of the Bruges speech, claiming that it was not as negative about Britain's commitment to Europe as her critics have inferred. For example, in her Bruges meeting Mrs. Thatcher laid emphasis on the fact that Britain's "destiny" lay in Europe "as part of the community."

The European Democratic Group whose 63 MEPs from Britain, Denmark and Spain make up the third biggest group in the European Parliament, claims that the prime minister has been highlighted as the principal opponent of the European Commission's legislation on 1992 only because others lack her boldness. The EDG says that the Germans in particular, who have their own reservations about 1992, cover away from the thought of leading the way themselves. The Germans are delighted, according to EDG sources, to let Mrs. Thatcher, who is unafraid of controversy, take the flack.

So, the EDG says, Mrs. Thatcher is behaving in a very practical way. Some EC members will be relieved that the bubble of optimism about 1992 was punctured in Bruges. France and Denmark are also opposed to harmonisation of VAT duties, whilst the lifting of all restrictions upon labour mobility worries Germany, already struggling with problems over non-EC guest workers. Already, following a meeting of the EEC finance ministers on 12 December, the Common Market Commission's plan for homogeneous indirect tax rates throughout the community seems likely to be completely reviewed. Mrs. Thatcher, who has opposed such measures whilst others could not summon the courage to speak up, may yet be viewed as the great Euro-Realist.

In response to those in the EC who look forward to a "United

General Barak, like others, said the army would keep trying. "We're determined to fight as long as necessary," he said. The goal, he explained, was to reduce the violence "so that the Israeli government can pursue political initiatives from a position of strength on its own schedule."

The government's schedule is uncertain. But for the first time, some mainstream politicians are urging the government to talk to the PLO, a suggestion that no elected official would have uttered in public just a few weeks ago. Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, is saying openly for the first time that he wants to solve the Palestinian problem through negotiation. The United States has tentatively accepted his offer, as have virtually all the other nations of the world.

Last week, Ezer Weizman, a leftist leader of the Labour Party, asserted that Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, when faced with "facts and practicalities," will realise that "the first ingredient for peace is a partner to talk to."

A partner in peace

"And the partner to talk to, whether you like it or not, is the

PLO," he said. "Until the new government was formed last month, Israel was unable to make foreign policy decisions because its four-year-old 'national unity' coalition did not have one voice. The Labour and Likud parties each had equal hands in the decisions, and they tended to nullify each other."

But now for the first time in four years, the government is capable of making foreign policy. In foreign affairs, the voice of the government is that of Likud, the party of Shamir and Arens. With so many other pieces in place, the world is waiting for that voice to speak. Shamir says he is preparing a peace plan, but he won't say what it will include or exactly when it will be presented. But during a tour of the Lebanese border, he gave a clear indication of his point of view.

In briefings, army officers told him how quiet the PLO has been; since November, they told him, there have been no attempted actions against Israel by Arafat's arm of the organisation.

"The PLO is still the same terrorist organisation," Shamir said. "They haven't changed, and we don't see any reason to change our attitude toward them." — The New York Times.

Thatcher and the 'sale' of 1992

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has been widely assailed in Europe for her sharp criticism of the advocates of the Single European Market. Contrary to popular belief, however, Mrs. Thatcher is not against fusion of Britain with the rest of Europe. But she has convincing arguments about how it should be done.

Mrs. Thatcher's ruling party are at pains to point out the "positive" aspects of the Bruges speech, claiming that it was not as negative about Britain's commitment to Europe as her critics have inferred. For example, in her Bruges meeting Mrs. Thatcher laid emphasis on the fact that Britain's "destiny" lay in Europe "as part of the community."

The European Democratic Group whose 63 MEPs from Britain, Denmark and Spain make up the third biggest group in the European Parliament, claims that the prime minister has been highlighted as the principal opponent of the European Commission's legislation on 1992 only because others lack her boldness.

The EDG says that the Germans in particular, who have their own reservations about 1992, cover away from the thought of leading the way themselves. The Germans are delighted, according to EDG sources, to let Mrs. Thatcher, who is unafraid of controversy, take the flack.

So, the EDG says, Mrs. Thatcher is behaving in a very practical way. Some EC members will be relieved that the bubble of optimism about 1992 was punctured in Bruges. France and Denmark are also opposed to harmonisation of VAT duties, whilst the lifting of all restrictions upon labour mobility worries Germany, already struggling with problems over non-EC guest workers.

Already, following a meeting of the EEC finance ministers on 12 December, the Common Market Commission's plan for homogeneous indirect tax rates throughout the community seems likely to be completely reviewed. Mrs. Thatcher, who has opposed such measures whilst others could not summon the courage to speak up, may yet be viewed as the great Euro-Realist.

In response to those in the EC who look forward to a "United

States of Europe," along American lines, Mrs. Thatcher claims that "Europe will be stronger precisely because it has France as France, Spain as Spain, Britain as Britain, each with its own customs, traditions and identity. It would be folly to try and fit them into some sort of identikit European personality." She further stated that it would be "plain commonsense" not to totally abolish border controls.

Mrs. Thatcher wants to take things "one step at a time," and that means keeping feet firmly on the ground: "What we need now is to take decisions on the next steps forward rather than let ourselves be distracted by Utopian goals."

The European Commission has been accused of campaign-sloganeering and unsubstantiated rhetoric concerning 1992. Economists note that the French, for example, who have done more than their fair share of trumpeting about the European Single Market, still retain restrictions on capital movements.

European officials admit that some of the initial euphoria over a single market has abated. In Germany there are new fears about lower standards of goods and services after 1992, and the weakening of German environmental controls.

Although protectionism is supposed to become a thing of the past at the onset of the European Single Market, there is concern that when tariff barriers are lifted, other curbs may replace them. This is what happened in 1968, when the community abolished internal tariffs to achieve customs union.

The most dangerous development for the rest of the world would be a "Fortress Europe" which had higher tariffs as a single unit than its individual constituents did previously.

As 1992 approaches, it remains to be seen how many of the European Commission's proposals are implemented and what their effects will be. For the time being, Mrs. Thatcher is quite prepared to be seen as the great spoiler at European party time. If her stand leads to what she views as a better justification for celebrating 1992.

Handwritten signature or note in Arabic script.

EN BREF

Attachez vos ceintures

L'usage de la ceinture de sécurité est obligatoire depuis hier pour les conducteurs et les passagers, avant des voitures à moteur. Le Département de la Sécurité publique, la ceinture est obligatoire, ainsi bien en ville que sur route, précise le communiqué. Les infractions seront punies par des amendes de 2 à 15 dollars. Cette mesure fait suite à une campagne d'information de deux mois dans les médias jordaniens.

Sharon menace de mort Arafat

Le ministre israélien de l'Industrie, Ariel Sharon, a déclaré samedi à la radio israélienne qu'il n'avait pas d'autre choix que de tuer Arafat. Selon Sharon, si ce n'est pas Arafat qui va mourir, ce sera le peuple palestinien. Cette « petite phrase » de Sharon jette un pavé dans la mare au moment où s'intensifie en Israël l'opposition à la politique gouvernementale envers l'OLP.

Husseini libéré

Fayçal Hussein, considéré par Israël comme le numéro un de l'OLP dans les territoires occupés, a été libéré dimanche après six mois de détention administrative dans une prison au Sud de Tel-Aviv. Déjà emprisonné à de nombreuses reprises auparavant, il avait été placé en détention pour six mois le 31 juillet, pour avoir participé à une réunion du mouvement pacifiste israélien « la paix maintenant » au cours de laquelle il avait publiquement soutenu l'appel de Bassam Abou Sharif, conseiller de Yasser Arafat, à la création d'un Etat palestinien à côté d'Israël.

Hors-bord à Aqaba

La première course internationale de bateaux hors-bord disputée en Jordanie s'est déroulée vendredi dernier au large d'Aqaba. La compétition a réuni onze bateaux de sept pays différents et s'est déroulée sur un parcours de 280 km aller-retour, passant par l'île du Pharaon (Egypte) et un village côtier saoudien. Au nombre des participants, les princes Abdallah et Fayçal. Le prince Fayçal, le Koweïtien Mashaal Jaber et Nasser Saad, des Émirats, ont gagné chacun dans leur catégorie.

La «troika» à Amman

Les ministres espagnol, français, et grec des Affaires Étrangères, MM. Francisco Fernandez Ordonez, Roland Dumas et Karolos Papoulias, sont attendus le 11 février à Amman pour des entretiens avec les responsables jordaniens. Les trois ministres se rendront les 11, 12 et 13 février en Jordanie, en Egypte et en Syrie dans le cadre de l'initiative de la Communauté européenne pour la recherche d'une solution juste et permanente de la question palestinienne.

Centre culturel français en Galilée

Un centre culturel français a été ouvert dimanche à Nazareth, destiné à la promotion de la langue française auprès des arabes israéliens, dont la majorité est concentrée en Galilée, dans le Nord du pays. Installé dans l'enceinte de l'hôpital français de Nazareth, tenu par les sœurs de St Vincent de Paul, il fonctionnera avec trois animateurs français. Le CCF de Nazareth est le cinquième du genre en Israël, après ceux de Tel Aviv, Haifa, Beer Sheva et Jérusalem-ouest. Nazareth est, avec ses 60.000 habitants dont près de la moitié sont chrétiens, la plus grande ville arabe d'Israël.

Vous écrivez?

Le Jourdain recherche des collaborateurs en free-lance, avec idées originales d'enquêtes et reportages. Contacter François Ducroux, Jordan Times, 667171.

Le saviez-vous? Papier-journal

Israël est le plus gros consommateur de papier-journal au Proche-Orient, avec 68.000 tonnes annuelles en 1987. Vient ensuite l'Arabie Saoudite (10.5 millions d'hab.); 25.000 tonnes. Koweït (1.8 millions d'hab.); 75.000 tonnes. Iran (43 millions d'hab.); 12.000 tonnes. Émirats (1.5 millions d'hab.); 9.100 tonnes. Jordanie (3 millions d'hab.); 8.600 tonnes. Irak (15 millions d'hab.); 7.200 tonnes. Syrie (10 millions d'hab.); 4.100 tonnes. Liban (2.5 millions d'hab.); 2.600 tonnes. (Sources: Association canadienne du papier)

Arafat rencontre la «troika» à Madrid CEE-OLP: coup d'envoi

Le rôle que peut jouer la Communauté dans la préparation d'une conférence internationale sur la paix au Proche-Orient a été discuté par M. Arafat à ses entretiens avec M. Arafat à Madrid, le vendredi 27 janvier, avec les ministres des Affaires Étrangères d'Espagne, de France et de Grèce.

Le chef de l'OLP, qui avait dîné avec le président du gouvernement, Felipe Gonzalez, a en outre été reçu par le roi Juan Carlos, et s'est entretenu avec les responsables des principaux partis politiques espagnols.

«L'Europe peut jouer un rôle fondamental», a affirmé M. Arafat à l'issue des entretiens. Pour des raisons géopolitiques, nous vivons autour d'une même mer, et aussi parce que l'Europe a une grande responsabilité historique au Proche-Orient. Interrogé sur ce qu'il attendait plus précisément de la Communauté, M. Arafat s'est montré évasif, rappelant simplement que «l'Europe a un grand poids dans l'opinion publique mondiale».

Du côté communautaire également, on semblait avoir de précisions à l'issue des entretiens. «Cette rencontre a permis d'étudier de quelle façon l'Europe pourrait collaborer au processus de paix», a affirmé M. Dumas.

Le ministre espagnol, M. Fernandez Ordonez, s'est lui aussi montré prudent, affirmant que «la rencontre a démontré la

volonté de la Communauté de jouer un rôle actif au Proche-Orient», mais ajoutant aussitôt qu'il n'y a pas de médiation européenne ni de plan européen simplement un effort européen pour aider à la paix. Il s'est félicité de la politique de modération actuelle de l'OLP, dont M. Arafat a souligné qu'elle constituait «une stratégie et non une tactique».

Du côté communautaire, on affirmait que M. Arafat n'avait guère insisté pour que l'Europe reconnaisse dès aujourd'hui l'Etat palestinien proclamé à Alger. Tant M. Dumas que M. Ordonez ont souligné qu'il n'existerait pas d'«objection de principe» à une telle décision mais qu'elle supposait «plusieurs conditions juridiques préalables qui, aujourd'hui, ne sont pas remplies».

De source proche de la «troika», on affirmait que M. Arafat avait avant tout demandé à la Communauté d'user de son influence auprès d'Israël et des États-Unis pour les amener à infléchir leur position. On ajoutait que M. Arafat avait fait preuve de beaucoup de réalisme dans son approche du problème de la conférence internationale de paix. Le chef de l'OLP a, en effet, reconnu qu'elle ne pouvait pas être convoquée d'emblée, et qu'il était nécessaire de mettre d'abord sur pied un «comité préparatoire».

Bons offices de la Ligue arabe à Tunis

Signes d'espoir au Liban

Les «bons offices» de la Ligue arabe sur la crise libanaise ont commencé lundi à Tunis dans une atmosphère propre, au Liban, à élarger le spectre de la partition.

Dès mardi, le ministre des Affaires Étrangères koweïtien, qui préside la commission de sept membres chargée de dénouer l'écheveau libanais, s'est déclaré optimiste, tout en ajoutant que la tâche serait rude. En effet, après quatorze ans de guerre, le Liban n'a jamais été aussi proche d'un écartement total: privé de président depuis quatre mois, le pays a deux gouvernements: l'un de militaires chrétiens (Michel Aoun) et l'autre à majorité musulmane soutenu par la Syrie (Selim Hoss).

Cependant, les milieux diplomatiques à Beyrouth relèvent des signes d'optimisme. Ils estiment tout d'abord l'accord intervenu en décembre entre Amal et l'OLP, après une guerre sans merci de plus de trois ans, comme un élément de stabilisation au Liban Sud, zone majeure de friction israélo-arabe.

Autre élément d'optimisme: l'initiative de au mois de janvier de du chef druze Walid Joumblatt pour permettre un retour des chrétiens dans le Chouf, qu'ils

avaient fui en 1983 pour le «pays chrétien» au Nord. Ce qui signifie peut-être la reconstruction d'une entité géo-politique jadis colonne vertébrale du Liban: le Mont-Liban, région centrale où cohabitaient chrétiens et druzes.

Enfin, le vent de l'entente a soufflé suffisamment fort pour pousser les chefs des deux gouvernements rivaux à se rendre à Tunis. Michel Aoun réclame avant tout le départ des 35.000 soldats syriens du Liban, alors que Selim Hoss met l'accent sur les réformes constitutionnelles. (d'après agences)

Amal-Hezbollah: la paix signée. Les milices chiites rivales Amal et Hezbollah ont signé mardi à Damas un accord mettant fin à neuf mois d'une guerre qui a tué plus de 500 personnes. Les deux milices sont convenues de former un centre d'opérations communes au Sud-Liban contre Israël, de cesser le feu immédiatement et d'échanger leurs prisonniers. L'accord, selon l'agence syrienne SANA, confiée à Amal le contrôle de la sécurité au Liban Sud, ce qui constitue un revers pour le Hezbollah. Mais la Syrie, rappelle SANA, reste le seul garant de l'ordre à Beyrouth Ouest.

Selon Ammar, étudiant, les préjugés restent forts en Europe sur le Moyen-Orient

Un Palestinien à Paris

Ammar, 25 ans, Palestinien, a quitté le Proche-Orient il y a six ans pour étudier l'information à Toulouse. Il poursuit aujourd'hui à Paris sa formation, complétée par des cours de sciences politiques. De passage à Amman où réside sa famille, Ammar raconte l'intifada face de France.

Les Français s'intéressent-ils au conflit israélo-arabe?

En général, on les sent assez indifférents à un problème qui, de leur point de vue, les concerne peu. L'intifada, ils sont au courant, mais c'est comme l'Afrique du Sud: les médias en parlent moins, on s'habitue, on oublie...

Quels sentiments nourrit-on vis-à-vis d'Israël?

Par souci de «décence», les gens affichent de la sympathie ou au moins de l'indulgence à l'égard de l'Etat hébreu, et ce pour deux raisons:

— Le sentiment de culpabilité, les images de l'holocauste forcent à la prudence quand on parle d'Israël. Une critique contre cet Etat est facilement suspectée d'antisémitisme. On assimile Israël et les juifs. Déformée par ce prisme, les opinions déclarées sont donc souvent marquées par l'aveuglement ou l'hypocrisie.

— Historiquement, il existe un a priori contre les Arabes, dans un esprit «croisé» de guerre sainte. Arabes égale Islam égale fanatisme égale menace pour l'Occident chrétien, et le tour est joué. Peu de gens semblent savoir qu'il y existe des Arabes chrétiens. Les frères Abdallah, par exemple... Et au Proche-Orient, les juifs sont souvent considérés comme un bastion avancé de la «défense» occidentale contre l'Islam. Après tout, ils partagent l'ancien testament avec les chrétiens.

L'approche de la cause palestinienne passe donc aussi par cette grille de lecture?



Selon Ammar, la presse française d'objectivité vis-à-vis d'Israël

Si l'on met de côté la récente prise de conscience provoquée par le spectacle de l'intifada, oui. Mais il faut y ajouter un antisémitisme latent, qui me semble beaucoup plus profond en France et en Europe que chez les Arabes eux-mêmes. Ainsi, le soutien au nationalisme palestinien de certains Français me semble effectivement mêlé d'antisémitisme. Exemple typique: cet article de Josette Allia dans le Nouvel Observateur (19 janvier) sur Beyrouth - Est, évidemment, où elle écrit: «De ce côté, une civilisation. Au-delà des limites interdictes, un autre monde qu'on imagine hostile, barbare. Totalement inconnu». Totalement inconnu? Elle n'a qu'à aller voir, au lieu d'imaginer et de transmettre ses fantasmes aux lecteurs. Au-delà des Palestiniens, c'est l'approche des Arabes qui manque cruellement d'objectivité. Où est l'information?

Tout de même, la presse a largement critiqué Israël, lors des massacres de Sabra et Chatila, par exemple...

Certainement, les journalistes ont accusé le choc au départ. Mais très vite, ce drame a été tourné à l'avantage des Israéliens. Dès que des manifestations pacifistes ont eu lieu en Israël, on a souligné le pluralisme et la liberté d'expression dont jouissent les Israéliens. En somme, Sabra et Chatila ont permis de

Renforcement de la coopération Jordano-égyptienne

Vers un marché commun arabe

Suite aux renforcements successifs des relations économiques jordano-nord-yéménites et jordano-égyptiennes, le Roi Hussein et Hosni Moubarak ont fait cette semaine de la formation d'un «marché commun» arabe regroupant la Jordanie, l'Égypte, le Nord-Yémen et l'Irak.

Le Roi Hussein a révélé samedi au quotidien Rai que des discussions étaient en cours pour mettre sur pied cet ensemble économique, et qu'on en étudiait déjà les aspects juridiques.

A l'issue d'entretiens avec le souverain Hachémite, le président égyptien avait également fait mention jeudi dernier au Caire de la formation de ce marché commun arabe. Soulignant qu'il existait déjà des commissions mixtes entre l'Égypte et ces trois pays, M. Moubarak a affirmé que cet ensemble ne serait dirigé contre personne et ne devrait pas susciter des susceptibilités. Selon lui, la porte est ouverte à tout Etat arabe désireux de s'y joindre.

Par ailleurs, la haute commission jordano-égyptienne s'est réunie cette semaine au Caire, sous la co-présidence du premier ministre jordanien Zeid Rifai et de son homologue égyptien Atef Sedki. La commission a notamment décidé de créer plusieurs sociétés communes (tourisme, viande, fourrage) et de porter à 350 millions de dollars en 1989 le volume annuel des échanges commerciaux entre les deux pays. Selon le ministère jordanien de l'Industrie et du Commerce, le volume des échanges se monterait à 250 millions de dollars en 1988.

La haute commission a également étudié les moyens de relier les réseaux électriques des deux pays, de densifier le trafic maritime entre Aqaba et Nuieba (Sinaï).

La semaine dernière, le haut-comité jordano-nord-yéménite avait décidé de renforcer les relations commerciales entre Amman et Sanaa.

Paix: le Roi optimiste

Interrogé sur l'éventuelle tenue d'un sommet arabe, le Roi Hussein s'est montré optimiste, estimant que tous les «indices et

facteurs plaident pour une réunion dans les meilleurs délais» de cette conférence. Optimisme encore quant à l'investiture du président américain George Bush: «Le monde vit actuellement une étape de changements fondamentaux», et il existe une orientation internationale «positive» à l'égard de toutes les questions qui menacent la paix et la sécurité dans différentes régions», a estimé le Roi.

Mais selon le souverain Hachémite, il faut attendre deux mois pour que la nouvelle administration américaine mette en place sa nouvelle politique étrangère.

Le Roi a souligné l'existence d'un bon climat psychologique dû au renforcement de la coopération économique arabe, aux efforts internationaux pour rendre possible une conférence de paix au Proche-Orient et pour régler le problème libanais. Il a encore mis l'accent sur un changement dans l'opinion israélienne, se référant à un récent sondage selon lequel 54% des Israéliens sont favorables à des négociations avec Yasser Arafat. (d'après agences)

Le qat, «or vert» du Yémen

Au Yémen du Nord, Ashami est un cultivateur heureux. Adossé au capot de son «pick-up» Toyota, la taille ceinte de la traditionnelle «futa», le pagnu yéménite, il a le geste assuré du propriétaire pour montrer les plantations de qat qui cascadenent autour de Jibla (Sud du Nord-Yémen).

«Le qat, c'est l'or vert du pays», dit-il en désignant les cultures en gradins plantées d'arbrisseaux, dont les feuilles, machées, produisent un effet euphorisant. Chaque vendredi, jour de marché, il dégringole la piste défoncée qui mène à Ibb (150 km au Sud de Sanaa, la capitale) pour vendre sa production personnelle. Une trentaine de gerbes vendues 100 rials (environ 10 dollars) l'unité tressautent au fond de sa camionnette, mais, certaines pousses, comme le «chami», plus fortes en amphétamines, valent trois fois plus.

Avec une certaine d'arbrisseaux, les paysans de la région réalisent un bénéfice net d'à peu près 3.300 dollars par an, une somme énorme dans un pays où le produit national brut par habitant avoisine les 600 dollars.

Le rituel du qat au Yémen est bien enraciné. Le Yéménite (du Nord) s'offre 2.000 heures de rêve narcotique à l'année. 90% de la population est consommatrice, moyennant des dépenses somptueuses qui grèvent les budgets familiaux.

«Il y a 20 ans, ici même, mon père s'entretenait sur le café, 10 fois plus de travail et 20 fois moins



Le qat a fait disparaître la culture du café

d'argent. A cette époque, le Qat était rare. Aujourd'hui, c'est 30% des revenus agricoles», déclare Ashami, dont les estimations recourent les statistiques (officielles) réalisées sur place.

Dans les années 70, saisi par la «fièvre verte» qui commençait à répandre sa manne sur ses voisins, Ashami s'est lancé dans le processus de substitution généralisé sur les hauts plateaux yéménites, qui a porté un coup de grâce quasi-définitif au café et à Moka, son port exportateur en ruine, sur la Mer Rouge: 5.000 tonnes en 1985, contre 50.000 au début du siècle.

Entre la prière de l'après-midi et celle du soir, la vie s'arrête au Yémen du Nord et chacun de chiquer dans les Majra (la pièce réservée au Qat dans les maisons yéménites) ou sur le tas: Le chauffeur sur la route, l'artisan à l'atelier, le commerçant sur son pas de porte. Tous les contacts commerciaux, techniques, ministériels ou autres, se font autour

d'une botte de qat, et nombreux sont les diplomates ou les représentants des organismes internationaux qui ont sacrifié à cette coutume.

Le 26 septembre, jour de la fête nationale, le moindre petit village dépense des sommes effrayantes: parfois jusqu'à 3.000 dollars pour le qat produit sur place et moitié moins pour les viandes de banquet.

En raison d'une émigration d'ouvriers yéménites vers les États-Unis, une filière du qat fonctionne entre Radda (Est du Yémen) et Detroit. Passage obligé par Toronto: en effet, contrairement aux États-Unis, le Canada tolère les importations de qat et les valises yéménites transitent donc par la frontière entre les deux pays nord-américains.

En France, la réglementation assimile les feuilles de qat à un stupéfiant, comme le rappelle un avertissement placardé dans le hall de l'ambassade à Sanaa. (AFP).

montrer combien Israël était un Etat démocratique! La presse française a fortement tendance à attribuer le «sale boulot» à certains Israéliens — Sharon en l'occurrence — et les bons côtés à Israël en tant que tout.

Et depuis l'intifada?

La presse a modifié son approche des Palestiniens, l'OLP a montré qu'elle n'était pas un repaire de terroristes et l'opinion est beaucoup plus nuancée. Israël n'est plus David contre Goliath. Depuis que les enfants des territoires occupés ont sorti leurs frondes, les rôles sont inversés. L'impact des images a été déterminant: je pense qu'une grande partie de l'opinion a basculé après le reportage de CBS montrant les soldats casser des bras à coups de pierres. Mais il y a encore du travail à faire dans la tête des gens.

Comment réagissent des mouvements comme SOS Racisme au soulèvement?

En France, on distingue deux racismes: le racisme et l'antisémitisme. Comme si le premier était moins condamnable que le second (MRAP, LICRA comportent la distinction dans leur intitulé même). Et faire cohabiter juifs et Arabes dans un mouvement devient une gageure quand il s'agit du Moyen-Orient. SOS Racisme, par exemple, a été déserté par de nombreux Arabes à cause de divergences sur le conflit israélo-arabe. SOS Racisme apparaît de plus en plus comme un mouvement pro-israélien. Ils ont refusé de participer à une manifestation à Paris contre la répression israélienne, parce qu'elle réclamait l'autodétermination palestinienne et la tenue d'une conférence internationale...

En tant que Palestinien, comment êtes-vous perçu par les Français que vous côtoyez?

Depuis peu, on m'accorde une

Horizon 2009: tremblez, Jordaniens

La Jordanie, héritière d'un passé riche en séismes, va-t-elle se remettre à trembler? Les experts s'accordent à pronostiquer un tremblement de terre d'ici 2009. Mais déjà, les ingénieurs ont des palpitations: selon eux, beaucoup de constructions ne répondent pas aux normes anti-sismiques.

Depuis le début du siècle, pas moins de 1.000 secousses de magnitudes diverses ont été enregistrées dans le Sud du pays et dans la vallée du Jourdain. Cette dernière est constituée par la faille syro-africaine, la plus profonde dépression du globe terrestre, qui bouge de mémoire d'homme depuis 2150 avant Jésus-Christ. De cette date à 1837, on compte 26 tremblements de terre, espacés en moyenne de cent cinquante trois ans. Le plus violent d'entre eux détruisit en 700 avant J.C. la ville de Jérash.

Plus récemment, une secousse de 6,1 sur l'échelle de Richter (qui va jusqu'à 9) tua 400 personnes en 1927 à Naplouze et détruisit 10 à 15% des maisons de la ville. C'est le dernier séisme majeur observé dans la région. Avant le prochain.

Car le côté ouest de la faille fait chemin vers le nord, lentement mais sûrement: une étude magnétique conduite en 1980 montre que notre côté du Jourdain a parcouru 107 kilomètres par rapport à la rive Ouest... en quelques millions d'années. Le 18 octobre, 1987, on enregistrait à Djebel Mabarak (région d'Akaba) une secousse de 4,9 sur l'échelle de Richter: le plateau arabe (du Sud de la péninsule à la Turquie, via la vallée du Jourdain) a décidé dement la bougeolette.

Selon le directeur de la Société scientifique royale, Faissal Suyagh, il faut s'attendre à des tremblements de terre d'une amplitude de 6 à

7 tous les 82 ans. Depuis Naplouze 1927, faites le compte...

«D'un point de vue géologique, la Jordanie est comparable à la Californie», estime Kays Al Kaysi, du Département de sismologie. Et d'un point de vue construction?

Selon les experts, la construction traditionnelle de maison «en cube» offre une bonne résistance aux séismes, mais tout dépend de la qualité du matériau et de la qualité de la construction. «Il n'y a aucun contrôle des matériaux employés derrière les pierres, pas plus que des normes de construction», déplore Daoud Jabaji, directeur du secteur construction de la SSR. «Résultat: le support de béton, au lieu de former une surface pleine, est constitué de lignes, qui se décollent à la première secousse».

En principe, des constructions bien faites en pierre et béton armé, comme on en rencontre dans beaucoup de quartiers d'Amman, devraient supporter le choc. Pourtant depuis que la loi interdit de construire des immeubles de plus de quatre étages. A l'inverse, les quartiers à forte population seront les premiers à souffrir d'un tremblement de terre: immeubles hauts, rapprochés, et de mauvaise facture (béton en colonnes).

Depuis 1986, le code de la construction oblige à ériger des bâtiments selon les normes anti-sismiques. Mais un code n'est pas une loi, et il dépend des seuls constructeurs qu'il soit appliqué ou non», souligne M. Jabaji.

Le problème est aussi économique: les gens qui font construire des maisons voient d'abord la dépense. Et en l'absence d'une menace évidente de tremblement de terre, pourquoi se conformer aux coûteuses normes anti-sismiques? Réponse en 2009. (F.D. d'après Ghadeer Taher et Najwa Najjar).

FIGURE Marco Polo en vélo

23.000 kilomètres à bicyclette sur la route de soie: l'idée de Jacques Fernandez, un Lyonnais de 25 ans, a séduit le jury du premier Tremplin de l'Aventure, organisé par la ville de Lyon. Avec 60.000 francs en poche, notre lauréat est parti de Lyon le 1er septembre pour un périple d'un an et demi qui le mènera à Canton (Chine). Il passait cette semaine à Amman.



Jacques Fernandez

de dix sept ans l'Europe et la Turquie en vélo. «C'est un moyen de rencontre extraordinaire, on aborde facilement les gens, qui ne se sentent pas agressés», dit-il. Dans chacun des pays qu'il traverse, Jacques étudie les techniques de travail de la soie, mais aussi son utilisation et son rôle social hier et aujourd'hui. D'ores et déjà, il a rencontré en Turquie et en Syrie des artisans utilisant des méthodes de filature vieilles de quinze siècles.

La Jordanie, terre de nomades, était essentiellement un pays de transit pour les marchands d'épices et de soie débarqués par la Mer Rouge ou remontant du Hedjaz. Jacques ne manquera pas de visiter Pétra, prestigieuse cité caravanière, avant d'aborder l'Arabie Saoudite. Ses notes et photos sont envoyées régulièrement à la ville de Lyon, célèbre en France pour ses soieries depuis la Renaissance. (FD).

A L'AFFICHE

CINEMA

Festival américain

Cinq films en cinq jours, choisis dans la catégorie cinéastes indépendants. Places sur invitation, mais on peut obtenir des billets dans le quart d'heure précédent le début de la projection:

- Close encounters of the third kind (1977), dimanche 5.
- Raising Arizona (1986), lundi 6.
- Fandango (1984), mardi 7.
- Heart like a wheel (1983), mercredi 8.
- The big Easy (1986), jeudi 9.

Centre américain, tous les soirs à 20h00 (en anglais)

Cinéclub

Films respectivement à 13h00, 15h00, 17h00, 19h00, 20h30. Le 2: The fly, Salvador, Alien, Chinese film, Wedding in Galilee. Le 3: Blade runner, Alfredo Alfredo, Messenger of death, Chinese film, Z. Le 4: Streets of fire, The warriors, Labyrinth, Chinese film, The Milano bean fields. Le 5: Wolf company, Portrait of Jenny, Plots on the hanging rock, Chinese film, Moon walker. Le 6: Déjà vu, The outsiders. One from the heart, Chinese film, Fight night (1). Le 7: Memphis, Ragtime, Alexandria why?, Chinese film, Fight night (2). Le 8: Fin, Lip stick, Anaconda, Chinese film, Two moon junction.

Films en version originale. Tél: 643981. Route de l'Université à droite après le bâtiment «Caterpillar», puis à gauche, 308 m.

CONCERT

Sun Rythm Section

Six musiciens américains, dont l'ancien batteur d'Elvis Presley, jouent le rockabilly des années 50.

Palace de Culture (Sport City), vendredi 3 à 19h00. Billets (1 et 3 dollars) en vente au Centre américain et à la Fondation Noor Al Hussein.

EXPOSITION

Jean-Paul Chambas Lithographies

Le peintre Jean-Paul Chambas est l'un des principaux acteurs du renouveau de la figuration dans la peinture occidentale actuelle.

CCF, du mardi 8 au 16 février.

STAGE PHOTO

Sous la direction du photographe Francis Chavreau, initiation et perfectionnement à la prise de vue, avec travaux pratiques dans Amman. Pelli-cule et appareils fournis. CCF, du lundi 6 au jeudi 9, 10h00-12h00, 10 dinars.

TELEVISION

«Le temps des vacances», avec Alain Delon et Daniel Ceccaldi: comédie. Une adolescente amoureuse de son professeur va contribuer au rapprochement de ses parents séparés. (JTV, vendredi 3 à 17h30).



Thousands of men, women and children are engaged in a variety of small-scale services and trade. (Photo: J. Maillard/ILO).

Informal sector — needs help, not scorn

ONE can find them in the slums and shanty towns of Africa's main cities — food vendors, petty traders, mechanics and hundreds of thousands of others engaged in a variety of small-scale trade and services. These men, women and children work and survive on the fringes of the modern sector, outside the reach of national laws on wages, working conditions, safety and health.

The informal sector plays an important economic role, employing more of the urban workforce than the modern industrial sector. Nevertheless, most governments continue to discriminate against it.

Recent country studies by the ILO's Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa (JASPA) show that the informal sector accounts for up to 60 per cent of urban employment in most African countries. In the urban areas of Benin the informal sector provides 95 per cent of all employment, while the figure is 73 per cent in Burkina Faso, 65 per cent in Niger, 65 per cent in Ghana, 55 per cent in the Congo and 50 per cent in Zambia, Togo and Nigeria.

Most of the informal sector activities are in retail trade, manufacturing and services. Even though it is largely a sector of the poor, some of its output meets the needs of the high-income group.

The scarcity of capital in many

of the less developed countries of Africa has not hampered the expansion of the informal sector. JASPA research has shown that informal sector entrepreneurs tend to draw upon their own resources and those of their relatives to start a business. About 87 per cent of all capital for these enterprises is raised in the family, with 10 per cent loaned by relatives, friends and money lenders, and only 3 per cent from banks or government institutions. In effect, the informal sector enterprise is a low-capital, labour-intensive operation which has mopped up a significant segment of the urban unemployed.

The capital investment for the creation of a single job in this sector ranged from a low of \$25.50 in Nairobi to \$42.30 in Freetown, to \$355.20 in Yaounde and \$477.80 in Djibouti.

However, many of these enterprises tend to die out within a short period of time because of stiffer competition, economic depression and slackening demand for their products. Their life expectancy, according to JASPA, ranges from an average of 39 months in the case of Lagos to about 79 months in Lome. The rising cost of raw materials, low productivity resulting from inadequate training and know-how, and insufficient capital add to their problems.

Official support

Official support and assistance to these entrepreneurs could prolong their life span, but the attitude of most African governments continues to be ambivalent. While governments place strong emphasis in their development plans on employment creation and basic needs satisfaction, the "day-to-day reality is harassment of the informal sector," JASPA notes. Most governments have been reluctant to implement laws that favour the informal sector or even put it on a par with the modern sector.

This can be traced to official resistance to promote what are considered "inferior" quality products or to encourage the proliferation of informal sector establishments and petty shanty towns. Western technology is often seen as the foundation for economic growth. Since informal sector enterprises concentrate on home-grown technology, they are considered inefficient and underserving of government support.

That the informal sector should be allowed to operate on an equal footing with the modern sector is not disputed. But upgrading this important segment of national economic activity requires help in many areas: vocational and managerial skills training for artisans and apprentices, transfer of

appropriate technology to improve quality and easier access to markets for the products of the informal sector.

Given the requisite assistance, can the informal sector in Africa provide the panacea for the continent's chronic unemployment? JASPA research shows that much of the employment-generating potential of this sector has already been fully exploited. Judging by past experience, one should not expect the informal sector to cure the continent's unemployment problem completely.

"Certainly it employs much more labour than the modern sector at the same level of capital stock. But the fact is that it cannot be expected to absorb all the migrants, whose share in the urban growth rate of most African countries is about 70 per cent," the study says. Consequently the traditional "safety valve" role of the informal sector cannot be relied on indefinitely.

The informal sector would have to expand by 10 to 15 per cent annually to accommodate the high rate of population growth. JASPA concludes: "Indeed, it is necessary that a concerted programme of action should be undertaken to raise the productivity of this sector, so as to make it as labour-absorptive as possible." — ILO information bulletin.

Hollywood's femme fatale

By Ivor Davis

NO ONE can accuse Kim Basinger of being a neophyte when it comes to cinematic sex.

She played a nymphomaniac opposite Burt Reynolds in *The Man Who Loved Women* (1983); a temptress for Sean Connery as 007 in *Never Say Never Again* (1983); the femme fatale exploiting baseball star Robert Redford in *The Natural* (1984); an obsessive sexual partner with Mickey Rourke in *Nine ½ Weeks* (1986); and a drunken bimbo destroying Bruce Willis' career in *Blind Date* (1987).

So who is going to believe Basinger as a naive extraterrestrial who thinks an orgasm is a musical instrument in *My Stepmother is an Alien*.

In a telephone interview from London, where she is filming *Batman* in which she stars as the Caped Crusader's (Michael Keaton) girlfriend Vicki Vale, Basinger discusses her role in *Stepmother*. "My character Celeste has a child's innocence and was never programmed for sex. Therefore, she has to start from scratch. She picks up her sexual attitudes from what she sees in movies and on television."

In the Richard Benjamin-directed film Basinger's provocative innocence is played off Dan Aykroyd as Dr. Steve Mills, a scientist searching for intelligent life in outer space. Mills' research results in his having a more than close encounter with Celeste, and the two eventually fall in love.

How did the actress, who is Hollywood's current reigning femme fatale, pull it off?

"I relied on the child inside me," she says. "But playing an innocent and the way I look is strip myself of everything I knew; Celeste has to learn to kiss. She comes to Earth and has to get the attention of this scientist (Aykroyd) who is not interested in anything (other than his work). So you take nature and life — what you've seen in movies and imitate the lot. Celeste has no inhibitions."

Maybe Celeste doesn't, but Basinger does.

The actress grew up in Athens, Ga., the third of five children, with a shyness that she says dogs her even today. "I'm a Hollywood recluse. I'm shy around large crowds. They make me uncomfortable. It is true I won't do the Oscar show because of that. I'm scared I might faint or die."

"I like the simple life. But I'm going out a little more. I'm lucky. I can live out my fantasies in

movies," she says.

And she has certainly lived them out in her career, which started in the '70s when Basinger was signed as one of the Ford Model Agency's top models. She made a quick leap to the small screen, landing the lead in the TV movie *Katie: Portrait of a Centrefold* (1978) and appearing in the TV remake of *From Here to Eternity* (1979).

But it was as the sultry Domino in *Never Say Never Again* that established her as a celluloid vamp. From there she appeared opposite Reynolds, Rourke — whose many steamy scenes with Basinger in *Nine ½ Weeks* ended up on the cutting-room floor — and Richard Gere in *No Mercy* (1986) in which the two stars have a sexual interlude while chained together in a Louisiana swamp. The 35-year-old actress is no slouch when it comes to comedy either, proving her talents opposite Willis and, more impressively, Jeff Bridges in *Nadine* (1987).

Private life

Basinger protects her private life with a passion, although there have been recently published reports that she plans to divorce her husband, makeup man Ron Britton. She met him when she made her first feature film, *Hard Country*, in 1981 and has shared a rambling ranch home with him and — at last count — seven cats and 10 dogs in the San Fernando Valley (Calif.). Reportedly, she has been dating *Batman* producer Jon Peters, who was once the steady companion of Barbra Streisand.

Although not willing to discuss her private life, Basinger does speak out on her heavyweight leading men. "Sean Connery is a devil and very smart; Richard Gere was the best partner I had; I know it sounds hysterical but I never got to know Mickey Rourke; Burt Reynolds has the quickest sense of humour in the business; Sam Shepherd (*Pool for Love*, 1985) is a horse... a human

Dan Aykroyd (right), a scientist in search of extraterrestrial intelligence, has an unexpected encounter with an alien in the form of Kim Basinger in the romantic comedy, *My Stepmother*.

one; Bruce Willis is a sweet gentleman and quite a talent; Jeff Bridges can play any part; Dan Aykroyd is smart and quick and in our new movie shows more emotion than he has in any picture."

Plans are afoot for Basinger to aim at a younger crowd: first with *Stepmother*, then with *Batman*, in which she gets to keep

on most of her clothes. Her role as Vale was originally intended for Sean Young, then offered to Basinger when Young was injured falling off a horse.

"I like the idea of change," she says. "Some of my films have been steamy and controversial... a lot of scenes never made it to the screen. Now I'm having fun playing to the younger set."



Hollywood's reigning femme fatale: Kim Basinger

A touch of black magic

and curious housewives.

"I set up practice a few months ago, and since then business has been booming. About 35 per cent of my clientele is white," he said. Masaka, the son of an Afrikaner (Dutch descent) farming family, grew up amid the strict Calvinist traditions of his people.

Ancient art

He became fascinated from an early age by the ancient customs of the black farm workers with whom he came in contact, and soon came to believe he had the gift of a sixth sense.

"I would see an aura around some people. In church I would see people with blood on their head. They were soon to die."

Masaka trained as a Sangoma after a black man he met offered to take him to Zululand for tuition in the ancient arts.

After learning the Zulu language, the young Afrikaner was taught the secrets of the witch doctor, which have been handed from generation to generation for centuries.

"I see into people's eyes, there I see what sort of character they have, if they have a medical problem."

"Telling the past and present, I use my eyes, but if I am asked to predict someone's future, I use

the bones," he said, indicating a skin bag which contains the tools of his trade.

Masaka's bag contains an exotic mixture of shells, playing dice, dominoes, a small banknote, the toe of a cow, a fox's kneebone, a piece of tortoise shell, and much more.

A throw of the bones gives Masaka the rundown on his patient's future, and provides the answer to the customary questions — the number of children the patient will have or their likely success in a business venture.

Masaka also use Muti — a secret mixture of herbs and roots

— to cure anything from impotence to arthritis, from a nagging spouse to a financial predicament.

Strings of roots, piles of leaves and mysterious powders lie heaped on the shelves of his "pharmacy", which takes up a corner of his office.

Epilepsy and sex problems

"Already I have had dozens of successes. I have driven out spirits, cured epilepsy and solved many sex problems," he said.

Masaka's herbal cures include a business luck powder, guaranteed to rid the troubled executive of all financial problems, a love

potion which brings bickering couples back into each other's arms and powders to drive out evil spirits.

"The recipes for my Muti are secret — the important thing is that they work," Masaka said.

The Pretoria medicine man now aims to try his hand abroad — he thinks that the United States is ready for his type of business.

"I have already heard from Americans who would like to have a consultation. Maybe my future lies there," he added, for once making a cautious prediction without resorting to the bones.

PRETORIA — Dressed neatly in white smock and trousers, Jan Groenewald receives his patients in a scruffy waiting room adorned with skins and tribal trophies.

The slight, blond man politely leads his clients to a tiny surgery where he pronounces on their health and future prospects in exchange for a 30-rand (\$12) consultancy fee.

Any idea, however, that Groenewald is in the dental or medical profession rapidly disappears when he dons a Zulu head-dress and produces a bag of animal bones.

Groenewald, 23, better known in the trade as Sangoma Masaka, is one of a handful of whites to have qualified as a Sangoma, or African witch doctor. "My mother thinks I am crazy, that the devils have got me, and some of my friends think it is very odd for a white man. But I have the talent, the gift," he told reporters during a visit to his office in a busy Pretoria suburb.

Masaka plies his ancient trade with a professional 20th century veneer. Telephones ring constantly, and a white-smoked trainee witch doctor takes appointments from worried businessmen, impotent lovers

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

For all your:
Packing,
Air Freight Forwarding,
Customs Clearance,
Door-to-door Service,
Ticketing and
Reservation needs,
please call:
AMIN KAWAR & SONS
Abdel Hamid Sharaf Street
Shmeisani
P.O. Box 7806
Amman, Jordan
Tel. 604676, 604696

STUDIO HAIG
Professional Quality in
1 Hour Service
Develop your colour film at
our shop and get:-
• **JUMBO photo**
size 30% larger
• **Free enlarge-**
ment 20 x 30 cm
Shmeisani - Opp. Grindlays
Bank. Phone: 604042
Sweibeh tel: 823891

To advertise in
this section

Call 667171-6
670141-4
ext. 223


The first & best
Chinese Restaurant
in Jordan
1st Circle, Jabal Amman, near
Ahliyyah Girls School
Take away is available
Open daily 12:00-3:30
p.m.
6:30-Midnight
Tel. 638968

慕堂餐廳
MANDARIN
Chinese Restaurant
The only typical Chinese
cuisine in Amman.
Chinese Flaming pot is available
Take away available
Open daily 12:00-15:30
18:00-23:30
Wadi Saqra Road - near Traffic
Bridge
Amman, Jordan
Tel: 661922

CHEN'S
CHINESE
RESTAURANT
Mecca Street, Yarmouk
Engineers' Housing
Estate, near Kilo
Supermarket.
Mongolian Barbecue for
Lunch Friday only
Tel: 818214
Come and taste our
specialties
Open daily 12:00-3:30
p.m.
6:30-Midnight


CHINESE
RESTAURANT
TAIWAN TOURISMO
Authentic Chinese Food
Korean Bar-B-Q
Charcoal Flaming Pot
Take-away service
Open daily Noon-3:30 p.m.
& 6:30 p.m. - midnight
Location: Near 3rd Circle
opposite Akilah Hospital
Tel: 641053


Hashmi
Restaurant
FIRST CLASS INDIAN
RESTAURANT
Special Executive Lunches
Take away service
available
Open Daily 12:30-3:30 p.m.
7:30-11:30 p.m.
After the Holiday Inn hotel
Towards 3rd circle
Tel: 659579 659520



Tony Gullfoyle
the Joint Stock Theatre in London.



Vincent Ebrahim in *Promised Land*.



Karim Al-Rawi, writer of *Promised Land*.

Promised land — playing for laughs

A British theatrical group has produced a play highlighting in comic situations, the tragedy unfolding in the Israeli occupied Arab territories.

By Maureen Ali

LONDON — It was partially an act of defiance which led the Joint Stock Company, one of Britain's most unusual and creative theatre companies, to stage its latest production, *The Promised Land*.

Under most circumstances, a play on Palestine is a controversial choice but at a time when small theatre companies are under scrutiny for diminishing government arts grants, Joint Stock's decision to espouse this prickly subject was rather provocative. Shortly after the first performance the company was stripped of its revenue status leaving it some \$45,000 short for the future — its future.

It was a calculated risk, explains Egyptian-born playwright Karim Al-Rawi. "Rather than compromise, we chose to write a play which would uphold the ethos of the company," he said in an interview.

The idea for *Promised Land* evolved from a previous production, *A Child in the Heart*, which examined the concept of utopia and the cost of trying to realise a social ideal. Jewish director Nick Broadhurst felt that something about Israel, a modern utopia which, like others, had gone drastically wrong, would be a fitting sequel. At that time, *Intifada* was into its fourth month and the plight of the Palestinians was dominating the headlines.

Since the Joint Stock approach involves group research and workshops in cooperation with the playwright, several company members travelled to the occupied territories and spent eight days talking to a wide range of people.

They visited towns, villages and refugee camps, interviewing teachers, academics, journalists, doctors, lawyers, policemen, soldiers on patrol, ordinary men, women and children who related their stories. One night was spent with a fugitive from the Israeli authorities who told them of previous experiences under torture. They also attended a rally led by Rabbi Meir Kahane, which left a profound impression.

When the time came for him to sit down and translate the group's impressions into words, Al-Rawi opted for a comic approach employing a fool, an anti-hero, as the central character. "After

much agonizing, I felt that more could be achieved through comic dialogue, comic negation than through any other means," Al-Rawi explained.

Thus the fool "Radi" believes that the only way he can survive life under occupation is by conforming to the Israeli image of a "good Arab." In trying to fulfil other people's expectations of him, Radi (Vincent Ebrahim) is transformed from unemployed Palestinian labourer into Rudi, an Israeli draft dodger whose shoes he attempts to fill.

"He fails," Al-Rawi explained, "because how can you placate those who deny your existence in the first place?" His position as "good Arab" or "good Israeli" is equally untenable.

This is not the first time the plight of the Palestinian has been tackled through the comic vehicle of a duped collaborator. Saeed, the leading character in Emile

Habibi's novel *The Pessoptimist* fulfils this role. He was, in turn, the inspiration for Mahjoub, in the play of the same name by the Palestinian theatre group Al-Hakawati. Like Saeed and Mahjoub before him Radi espouses the philosophy: if you cannot beat them join them. This inevitably leads to his rejection by both communities, like his predecessors, Radi is meant to evoke certain sympathy as a simple human being seeking happiness and, more so, survival. In the end he is merely pathetic.

In his journey through life, Radi stumbles across a number of grossly exaggerated characters all of whom represent people encountered by the Joint Stock during their visit to Israel. The gun-toting, bible-bashing Rabbi Molech, played by Jamaica-born actor Leo Winger, encapsulates the extremism of the American-born Meir Kahane.

Tony Gullfoyle's menacing Colonel Bloody Boss adds flesh to recent comments, which have come from within the Israeli intelligentsia, that the Israeli army is run by Nazis. This character's name is a reminder of the frequent parallels which have been drawn between the brutal politics of Israel and South Africa. Gullfoyle also plays a smirking Imam who seems to signify impotence among the clergy.

Steven Marcus's beefy, brainless Shlomo Ben Bop reflects the traditionally downgraded image of the Sephardic Jew in Israel. His grudging relationship with Radi/Rudi reinforces the popular view of a love-hate approach between Oriental Jews and Arabs.

Lucy Sheen, unconvincing as Radi's long suffering wife and Rabbi Molech's naive son Benji, completes the cast. (In all Joint Stock productions most actors

take several roles). The decision to ham it up in the name of humour does not allow the actors a lot of room for development.

The comic dialogue does, however, facilitate some pertinent comments on the brutality of the Israeli state. The way these facts are woven into the fabric of the play is perhaps its saving grace. Too often, however, words and actions deteriorate into gutter humour and slapstick, which undermine the rest of the play. Nor is it enhanced by its extraneous celestial visitor — an archangel en route to perform another immaculate conception — played with naked enthusiasm by Leo Winger.

In Joint Stock productions, all

the characters and their actions are the result of the distillation process which takes place between the writer and the rest of the group. It is a demanding process with the potential to produce powerful works. In *Promised Land*, the system could have worked better.

The play itself is cluttered with details which may have been deemed significant during the discussion stages but, in the final product, seem redundant. It is as if Joint Stock felt it necessary to go into code, as a means of self-protection against an anticipated onslaught of pro-Israeli criticism. And it has been left to the audience to try to decipher this as best it can. — Academic File.

Holland's latest AIDS campaign targets teenagers

By Peter Marijnissen

NETHERLANDS — Information on AIDS is widespread in the Netherlands, so it is almost impossible for most young people to be ignorant of the basic facts. Leaflets are available in post offices and libraries, at local health centres and at the many organisations that deal with homosexuality, drug addiction, and guidance on health and sexuality.

Mass media regularly address the problem, especially during a national campaign, and people who really want all the details can telephone one of the national or local information lines.

At the end of 1988 there were just over 600 registered AIDS patients, largely homosexuals, drug users, or a combination of both. The number of people with HIV is estimated at between 15,000 and 30,000. These figures compare well with countries like France and West Germany, but that is no reason for complacency. With 37 cases per one million inhabitants, the Netherlands is still well up in the top 10 of Europe as far as prevalence is concerned.

"We realise that AIDS is a national issue, so we have a message for everybody," says Bart Eijndorf of the NCAB, the National Committee on AIDS, founded and financially supported by the Dutch government. Since its formation in 1987, the Committee has initiated a series of national campaigns, and co-

ordinated and supported initiatives by several organisations like the Rutgers Stichting, the Dutch family planning association (FFA).

Two-fold aims

"Our aim is twofold," Bart Eijndorf explains. "In the first place we want to stop the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In the second place we want to control the reactions of society. We are trying to emphasise that AIDS is not some scary

"As in all the other campaigns our policy is to inform people without scaring them and without forcing upon them all kinds of moral judgements. We don't want young people to become averse to sex or to blame homosexuals. What we offer them are four choices: you can have no sex at all, you can have sex with a permanent partner you are sure of, you can use a condom or you can employ other ways of making love. We don't make a choice. That is up to them."

disease, caused by homosexuals and drug addicts. There is nothing to be afraid of, as long as people know what they are doing. In short, we want to stop the negative image that unquestionably creeps in."

The first national campaign, in 1987, was meant to inform the public in a matter-of-fact way, mainly trying to avoid all kinds of prejudiced reactions. The second campaign, launched in April

1988, was particularly directed at those who come into contact with blood in the course of their work.

Apart from these nationwide campaigns the NCAB has aimed publicity at particular groups thought at risk, such as intravenous drug users, homosexuals, haemophiliacs or travellers to Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean.

In accordance with the wishes of the Dutch Parliament, a third national campaign has been running since the end of last October, this time directed at young

the prevention and guidance policy at the Rutgers Stichting.

"Especially among young people 'safe sex' is a well-known notion, partly due to the publication of the leaflet 'Safe Sex on Vacation' in May 1988.

"But it appears that all that knowledge does not always lead to a necessary change in sexual behaviour. According to research, adolescents who begin their sexual career start to use contraceptives only after six months on average. Furthermore, many girls are using the Pill. That is a very good precaution, but not against AIDS. It is also important to realise that sexual education is not a compulsory subject at secondary schools."

"In our campaign we don't want to deprive young people of the necessary chance to experiment with sex, as seems to be the strategy in the United States. But we certainly do point out that they have to make choices: what do I want or not want, and how do I make it clear to the other person? To help, we have published, two small books."

Curiosity

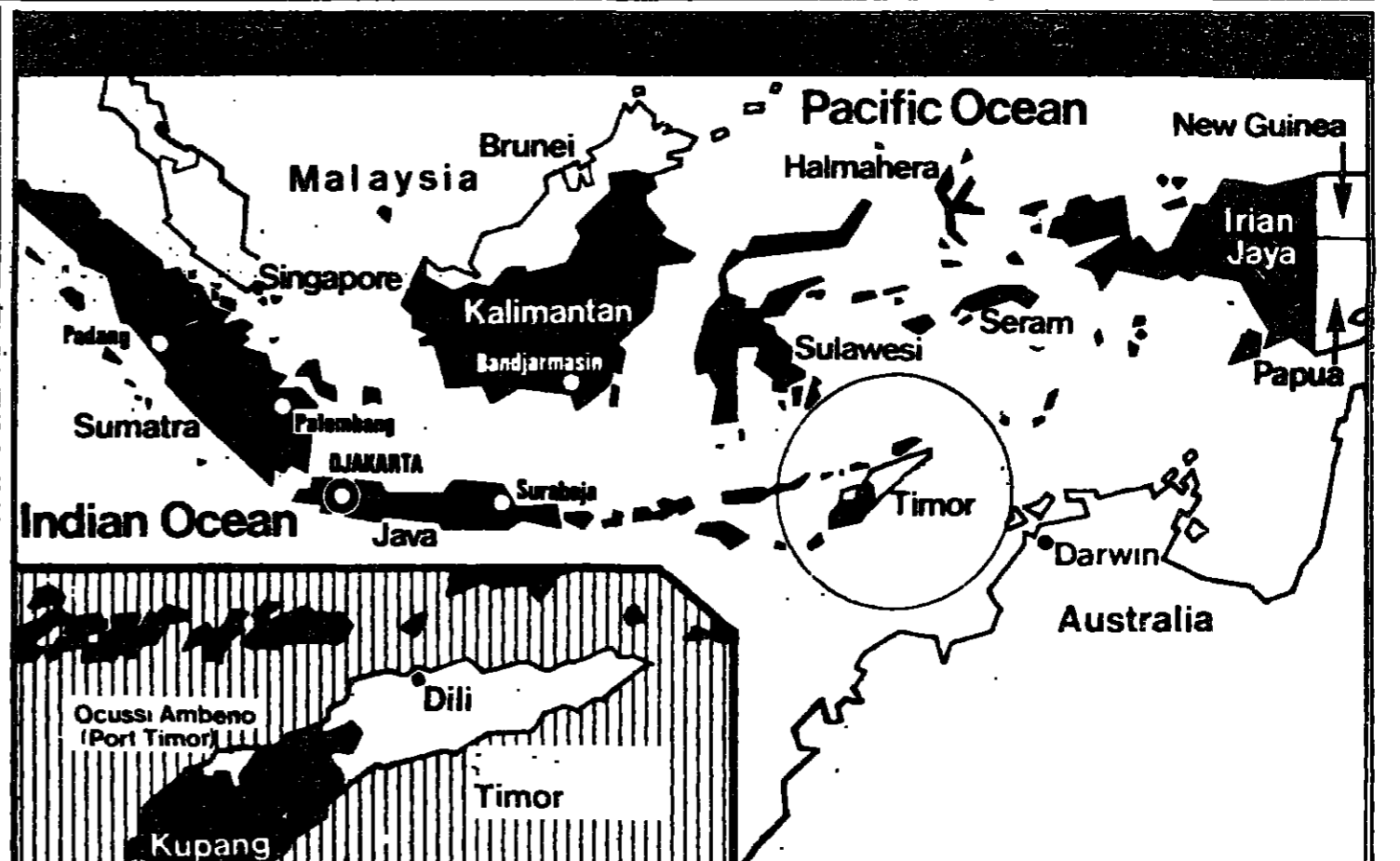
The books, different for boys and girls, are principally meant to arouse curiosity and offer a starting point for talking. The FFA also provides additional information for parents and teachers in order to stimulate discussions at school.

At the end of January, information folders will be available for the many local and national organisations that are, in one way or another, dealing with young people. There will be extra training for FFA staff, and in February a conference and workshops on sexual education in the age of AIDS.

Youngsters visiting the Rotterdam family planning association seem to know about AIDS. But to their knowledge they have never met anyone who is seropositive, let alone a person with AIDS. They don't know that in an Amsterdam study 40 per cent of homosexuals were infected with HIV — though the rate of new infections is now very low — and one-third of intravenous drug users are believed to have the virus. This rate continuing to rise, despite some effective needle-exchange schemes.

Officials think that probably one out of every hundred Amsterdam inhabitants is infected. But the young people come from an ordinary provincial town and the dangers seem distant.

In a way they are right. The situation in the Netherlands is not that bad. There is an open attitude to sex, information is plentiful and easy to obtain and, apart from some orthodox but scarcely influential religious movements, everybody had been convinced of the need to provide information about AIDS. — People News



Indonesian transmigration: the controversy goes on

By John Madeley

Indonesia's transmigration programme, the world's largest movement of people in recent times, has brought about an improvement in the lives of "two-thirds of migrants," claims a World Bank country study, *Indonesia: the transmigration programme in perspective*.

It is clear from the study, however, that many of the three million people who migrated between 1950 and 1986 face substantial and continuing problems. Particularly disturbing is that some of the early migrants are experiencing lower incomes due to the declining fertility of their soil.

The idea behind Indonesia's transmigration is to spread population more evenly throughout the country. People have been moved from the heavily populated islands of Java, Bali, Madura and Lombok to less densely populated outer islands, such as Sumatra, Kalimantan and Irian Jaya. Current population densities tell their own story — Java has a density of 801 people per square kilometre; Sumatra, 76 people per sq kilometre; and Irian Jaya, 6 people per sq kilometre.

Migrants receive, on average, 2 hectares of land per family, says the study. This is usually land from which forest has had to be cleared. Arriving from the fertile rice-growing lands of Java, the settlers have faced the daunting task of growing their rice and other crops on such land (some of it thick peat) in a way that is sustainable.

Cleared forests

Cleared forest areas are notorious for their low soil fertility — and the study admits: "A major question is whether agricultural production can be sustained on marginal soils."

In a survey of 1,500 migrant families, the Ministry of Transmigration found that in most areas, incomes from food crops were highest for settlers who had been "on site" from five to six years. "They are lower for those who have been on site nine to ten years... it is likely that older sites have lower agricultural incomes due to declining soil fertility."

The study stresses that if this were the case it "would be a matter for serious concern." The government argues, the report says, that "improved site selection and farming systems will enable recent settlers in food crop sites to sustain or improve yields or incomes." This, says the study, remains to be confirmed.

Among project officials there is certainly very serious concern. On a visit to one resettlement site in late 1987, I found officials encouraging differing crop rotations but admitting that they had not yet found a rotation that would overcome the soil fertility

problem. It may have to be faced that no such combination exists for some sites — and that they may have to be abandoned. The study does not countenance any such notion.

Another controversial aspect of transmigration has been the loss of forest. This the World Bank plays down. The study calculates that by the year 2000 some two million hectares of forest might have been used by government-sponsored migrants. "This is a large area," it says, "although less than the area under shifting cultivation in Central Kalimantan alone."

Infrastructure

The bank study appears to take no account of the forest cleared for new roads and infrastructure. Non-government agencies estimate that total forest clearance is already around some five million hectares. Indonesia's Network for Forest Conservation, SKEPH, estimates that every hectare of usable land created by transmigration adversely affects an additional 4 hectares of forest. It is admitted that in Irian Jaya, which has "the largest undisturbed lowland forest in South-East Asia," forest concession will have a significant impact on the environment unless there is a major protection effort.

The most effective protection, however, would be to use grassland rather than forest sites — which some non-government organisations believe is feasible. The impact of the programme on people who are native to the settlement areas has been a

further cause for concern. The study asserts "no programme of this magnitude has been carried out with less communal tension." Reassuring words, but whether they convey the whole story is less certain.

Many of the settlement sites are in isolated areas which get little or no news coverage. It seems as if the integration of native and migrant peoples has gone reasonably smoothly but it is doubtful if the real picture has emerged. More detailed studies remain to be done.

Indonesia's transmigration is now stalled — partly because funds have run out — although spontaneous movements between the islands go on. But can life for the people who have already settled be improved? The World Bank's advice only demonstrates how shaky the whole programme really is.

"The most important form of second-stage development is likely to be tree crop establishment in existing sites," says the study. But what are these tree crops? Chiefly rubber, oil palm and coconut. The World Bank likes to encourage such growth — and there is a hint of irony when we read "the declining trend in commodity prices for tree crops is a matter of serious concern." The Bank has contributed to that decline by encouraging too many countries to grow too many cash crops. In the precarious situation that Indonesian transmigration is now in, the advice to plant more tree crops only highlights the desperation. — People News



No cure was found for AIDS, the baffling disease that destroys the body's defence systems.

Israeli settlements get no funds in budget

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Finance Minister Shimon Peres submitted to parliament Tuesday a cost-cutting budget for 1989-90 that provides no money for new Jewish settlements in the Israeli-occupied territories.

Peres said 22 per cent of the budget would go to "security" needs, including 100 million shekels (\$55 million) for the army's use against the 14-month-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

David Boas, treasury budget director, told reporters that because of the budget cuts, no money was set aside for eight new Jewish settlements accepted by a new right-left "unity" government formed five weeks ago.

The failure to earmark funds sparked criticism from rightwingers. Boas said cabinet ministers could individually deviate from their budgets if they wanted to finance the settlements.

Some 70,000 Israelis live in the settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Knesset, Israel's parliament, is expected to accept the \$2 billion shekel (\$29 billion) budget before the start of the fiscal year April 1. Israel's

cabinet approved the budget earlier. Peres' political future may ride on his ability to infuse life into the country's struggling economy.

Israel is experiencing a recession in part because of the uprising combined with bad weather that has harmed crops. Tourism, Israel's largest industry, dropped by 15 per cent in 1988 because of the uprising.

Peres, the Labour Party leader, took over the treasury when rightist Likud Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir formed the "unity" government in December.

"I ask the Knesset to approve the budget," Peres said in a speech that appealed to workers and employers to work with him for economic growth.

The new budget includes government austerity measures approved by the cabinet on Jan. 5.

These would raise high-school fees, impose a small charge for doctor visits, cut subsidies on food and public transport and reduce the public work force by

three per cent. Peres said he hoped to reduce annual inflation to less than 10 per cent by the end of the year. The figure just exceeded 16 per cent in both 1987 and 1988.

He offered no official estimate for 1989 inflation, but ministry officials said privately they expected it to reach 20 per cent. They said this was because of cuts in subsidies and a 12 per cent shekel devaluation in January.

The treasury forecast a 1.9 per cent rise in gross domestic product compared with a one per cent rise in 1988.

Economists say Peres is making a bold effort to transform export-reliant Israel into a more open, capitalist economy, 40 years after the Zionist state was established with East European-style state socialism and bureaucracy.

Peres told reporters Monday his top priority would be increasing exports in 1989. He said he hoped his measures would stimulate economic growth by boosting profitability for exporters.

Forty per cent of the budget is for paying off government debts. The budget includes \$3 billion in U.S. economic and military aid. Officials said they expected an overall deficit close to the 1.3 billion shekels (\$720 million) in the 1988-89 budget.

Cancellation of Cairo fair brings chaos

CAIRO (R) — Diplomats scrambled Tuesday to stop shipments of exhibits for the Cairo international trade fair after it was abruptly cancelled.

Egypt, in telexes to embassies and suppliers, cited technical reasons for the decision. Trade Fair Authority Chairman Hamid Attwa declined to talk to reporters and other officials would not elaborate.

Some diplomats speculated that Egypt, faced with requests from both Arab countries and Israel to attend the March 11 fair, cancelled it for political reasons.

"It may be because of a refusal by other countries to exhibit beside Israel," a Western diplomat said.

Another diplomat, sceptical that Egypt would bow to outside pressure, suggested that police might have received information about a security threat.

An angry East European diplomat at the fairgrounds said he had been refused a meeting with Attwa and his country might sue if no action was taken to solve problems arising from the cancellation.

He said his country had paid about \$50,000 for a pavilion and its exhibit had already been shipped to Alexandria.

"What is going to happen to it? We don't want to leave it at the harbour or send it back — it's too expensive. We want to bring it in and sell it," he said.

A Western diplomat said his country, after frantic action, had succeeded in stopping shipments before they left for Egypt.

A fair official said at least 31 countries had planned to take part in the fair and Egypt was working out how to reimburse those which had made payments.

The national Middle East News Agency later quoted Attwa as saying the fairgrounds were being expanded and repaired.

He said the work would be completed before the next international trade fair in March, 1990, and an exhibition of Egyptian export products in October would not be affected.

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Danili to build steel plant in Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq has signed a contract with an Italian firm for a steel plant to be built capable of producing 300,000 tons a year, the English-language Baghdad Observer reported Wednesday. It said the contract was signed Tuesday by Industry Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan and Janiero Benedetti, general manager of Italy's Danili Company. The newspaper gave no details on the value of the contract or location of the plant.

London to probe De Beers deals

LONDON (R) — British authorities said Tuesday they were investigating complaints that the South African De Beers Company was involved in unfair diamond trading in London. British Consolidated Gold Fields (Cons Gold) said it had complained to the government Office of Fair Trading (OFT) as part of its campaign to block a hostile takeover bid. The bid, worth \$2 billion (\$3.5 billion), is being made by Minorco, the overseas investment arm of the Anglo American Corporation and the De Beers Group of South Africa. Earlier, the OFT told Britain's national news agency the Press Association that a complaint had been made. If it found there was a case to answer, it could refer De Beers to the state Monopolies and Mergers Commission. "We registered four complaints of unfair trading and restrictive practices with the OFT and they have begun a preliminary inquiry. We think they might be breaking British cartel laws," Cons Gold spokesman Hugh Impey told Reuters.

Sri Lanka to seek aid for poor

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka is expected to seek foreign aid to help finance a controversial poverty-reducing scheme, government economists have said. A senior central bank economist said foreign aid would be sought once the plan is finalised. "Details of the scheme are unlikely to be presented to foreign missions before next month's parliamentary election," he said. President Ransinghe Premadasa is leading a ruling United National Party campaign for the Feb. 15 parliamentary poll, also contested by eight other political groups. The president is trying to woo voters with the plan, to be implemented in April. The plan involves awarding 2,500 rupees (\$75) to each of the 1.5 million poor families in Sri Lanka who are presently living on food stamps. The opposition has criticised the scheme as unworkable and said Premadasa could not finance it. A Western diplomat said the plan had some interesting aspects and foreign assistance was possible. Officials said the two-year scheme could cost anything between 10 billion rupees (\$300 million) to 30 billion rupees (\$900 million) in the first 12 months.

Coffee exports register big fall

LONDON (AP) — World exports of coffee dropped by 10 per cent last year to their lowest level for at least six years, the International Coffee Organisation has announced. Last year's exports dropped to 64.61 million bags from 72.09 million in 1987, according to the 74-nation coffee organisation's preliminary figures. One bag contains 60 kilograms. The drop was largely the result of decreased demand following high import levels in 1987, traders said.

Boeing reports higher profits

SEATTLE (R) — Boeing Co. has said its fourth-quarter profits increased 23 per cent, capping a big year for the world's largest commercial aircraft manufacturer in which it received a record \$30.1 billion worth of orders. The company said its quarterly earnings rose to \$174 million on sales of \$4.87 billion. For the year, Boeing said it earned \$614 million on sales of \$16.95 billion versus \$480 million in earnings and \$15.51 billion in sales in 1987, and projected 1989 sales around \$22 billion. Boeing said the increase in profits for both the quarter and year was due primarily to increased sales volume, lower levels of research, development

and other new business expenses, a lower income tax rate and increases in other income. But it reported an operating loss in its military transportation products and related systems segment because of continuing problems with several military airplane programmes.

Nigeria helps troubled airlines

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria, Africa's biggest oil producer, has lowered the price of fuel for domestic flights to help airlines crippled by escalating costs. Nigeria's National Petroleum Corporation introduced a two-tier price system and almost halved the cost of fuel for domestic flights to one naira (14 U.S. cents) a litre from the previous 1.85 naira (26 U.S. cents) a litre. The price of fuel for international flights remains \$1 a gallon (4.5 litres), to be paid in hard currency. State-owned Nigeria Airways said last week it would have to cut one of its four weekly flights to London because it could not earn enough foreign exchange to pay for the fuel. Private operator Air Africa suspended its domestic flights altogether and other airlines said they were also cutting back on services. Airline earnings have been hit not only by rising fuel costs, but by falling passenger numbers and the depreciation of the naira, in which most tickets are paid.

South Koreans earn more

SEOUL (AP) — Monthly earnings for South Korean urban households rose 20.4 per cent last year from \$856 in 1987, according to government figures. The Economic Planning Board listed the average monthly income of urban households in the third quarter of last year at \$995, up 20.4 per cent from the same period of 1987 and up 12.4 per cent in real terms. Consumer prices in the same period rose 7.1 per cent from a year earlier, it said.

Swiss close Lebanese-linked bank

BERN, Switzerland (AP) — Switzerland's Federal Banking Commission has revoked the license of a Lebanese-controlled bank, saying it had liquidity and organisational problems and had violated the country's banking code. The watchdog commission, in withdrawing the right of the Lugano-based Banque de Participations et de Placements S.A. (BPP) to operate in Switzerland, said the bank had failed to heed a warning last November to resolve its liquidity problems. It was the first time since 1983 that Swiss authorities ordered a bank closed. The commission did not detail reasons for its move. BPP officials could not be reached for comment. BPP, which specialised in personal asset management, is 35 per cent owned by Bank Al Mashrek, based in Beirut, and 65 per cent owned by Compagnie Holding S.A. of Geneva. Daniel Zuberbuehler, the banking commission's vice director, described the bank as Lebanese-controlled. The revocation of BPP's license is effective immediately, the commission said.

Defective goods cost China \$5b

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese industry lost an estimated 18.32 billion yuan (\$5 billion) last year from production of defective and substandard goods, an official newspaper has said. A survey of 108 machinery, electronics, textile, pharmaceutical and other plants found each produced an average 680,000 yuan (\$134,000) worth of unusable goods last year, the Economic Daily (Jingji Ribao) reported. The survey, carried out by the China Quality Control Association, said the losses accounted for 1.51 per cent of their total industrial output. The paper quoted an official of the association as saying the nationwide loss ratio is probably considerably higher. The association said 90 per cent of the waste resulted either from losses in the production process or the production of substandard goods. Losses during transport were also substantial.

U.S. targets 'crime in suites'

WASHINGTON (R) — The Justice Department is cracking down on fraud in U.S. financial markets to prevent Wall Street and Chicago commodities scandals from jeopardising market confidence because of "crime in the suites."

Attorney General Dick Thornburgh announced Tuesday that the department has formed six special teams to find crooks who have already cheated investors and traders — and to deter anyone else thinking of trying the same.

"Unlike so-called street crime and other violent offences, evidence of 'crime in the suites' frequently is not immediately evident," he told a news conference. But he said President Bush was

committed to assuring both investors and traders of the integrity of U.S. financial markets despite the insider trading scandal on Wall Street and investigation of alleged widespread fraud in the Chicago commodities markets.

"I think what we're trying to do here is to advertise to those who may think of further wrongdoing at the expense of American consumers and investors that they've got some powerful weapons that they're going to have to confront," he said later on television.

Thornburgh announced at the news conference that the units, drawn from several federal agencies, would help Washington track down the proliferating number of white-collar criminals who rip off unsuspecting investors and

the U.S. treasury. "Investors are bilked out of hundreds of billions of dollars annually by white-collar criminals who operate through deceit, concealment or breach of trust beneath a thin veneer of legitimacy and respectability," Thornburgh said.

He said the growth of highly sophisticated fraud in securities and futures markets costs the U.S. treasury \$90 billion every year.

"We are here this morning to express our concern over the increasing number of investigations and prosecutions in the securities and commodities field," he said.

The new task forces will operate out of New York.

FOR SALE

Flat and Foreign-made Furniture

- 1- Flat consisting of 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, salon and dining room.
- 2- Furniture on sale together with electrical appliances. Address: Jabal Amman, directly behind Zahran Palace, near Mu'ta University Office - Fuad Al Sayegh Building. From today, Thursday at 11 a.m. until Friday 5 p.m.



AMMAN BACCALAUREATE SCHOOL seeks

- a) For March 1989, a qualified half-time teacher of French language and literature in the Senior School to GCE and International Baccalaureate (A level equivalent).
- b) For August 1989, three native English speaking classroom teachers for the Junior School (grades 1-6).

The successful candidates must be experienced and qualified teachers and be able to instruct in the fields of English, social studies, physical education and art. Deadline is February 12/89. Application forms are available from the reception. Telephone no. 845572 or 847191/2.

WANTED

FINANCIAL SPECIALIST

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) currently has a vacancy for a Jordanian National Financial Specialist to serve as the senior advisor on developments relative to banking, financing and investment. Candidate must be able to develop and maintain contacts with officials at senior levels in the government and financial community. Candidate must have undergraduate degree in business finance (graduate degree preferred) with 5 or more years work experience in the financial sector, good current knowledge of Jordanian financial/banking system, fluency in speaking and writing in both English and Arabic, and must be able to draft written reports in English.

Qualified candidates should submit resumes and sample of writing skills not later than February 16, 1989 to:

**Personnel Office
U.S. Agency for International Development
P.O. Box 354, Amman, Jordan**

Dr. Sharhabil S. Ammus M.D.

HEMATOLOGIST

Diplomate American Board of Internal Medicine
Diplomate American Board of Hematology
Ex. Assistant Prof. of Med. U. of MIAMI USA.

Announces the opening of his Clinic

Jabal Amman, Fourth Circle, Khaldi Hospital
Opposite Rawhi Pharmacy Tel. 654960



**J & B
IT WHISPERS**

MANY VILLAS AND APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Furnished or
Unfurnished

In Shmeisani, Sweifieh, Abdoun and many other locations.

For more information please call Wael Real Estate at 685342

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, Feb. 1, 1989
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	77.3	77.7
U.S. dollar	493.0	495.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	378.1	380.0
Pound Sterling	863.9	868.2	Dutch guilder	27.8	284.0
Deutschemark	262.8	264.1	Swedish crown	77.6	78.0
Swiss franc	308.5	310.0	Italian lira (for 100)	36.0	36.2
			Belgian franc (for 100)	125.5	126.1

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.7485/95	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1832/42	Canadian dollar
	1.8685/95	Deutschemark
	2.1100/10	Dutch guilders
	1.5920/27	Swiss francs
	39.11/16	Belgian francs
	6.3625/75	French francs
	1367/1368	Italian lire
	129.85/95	Japanese yen
	6.3460/3510	Swedish crowns
	6.7530/80	Norwegian crowns
	7.2590/2640	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	391.65/392.05	U.S. dollars

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Shares ended lower as concern over the state of the economy dominated the Australian national market. The All Ordinaries index fell 20.3 points to 1,531.4.

TOKYO — Prices closed sharply lower on worries over a strong rise overnight in the dollar. The Nikkei index fell 220.62 to 31,360.68.

HONG KONG — Heavy profit-taking finally lassoed the bull and Hong Kong stocks closed lower for the first time in seven days. The Hang Seng index fell 11.95 to 3,060.91.

SINGAPORE — Prices closed generally higher but some gains were pared in the afternoon after another active day's trading. The Straits Times industrial index rose 3.69 to 1,137.01.

BOMBAY — Prices suffered a setback amid concern over political fighting in Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's ruling Congress (I) Party.

FRANKFURT — Fears of higher West German interest rates, coupled with Deutsche Bank's Tuesday decision to tap the market for 1.3 billion marks, drove prices to a new low for 1989. The DAX index fell 12.21 to close at 1,300.52, just above the low.

ZURICH — Shares closed slightly lower in quiet trading, with the market failing to draw support from the overnight gain on Wall Street. The all-share Swiss index fell 3.3 to 961.1.

PARIS — Prices were steady at midday in relatively buoyant trading despite a one-day strike by bourse employees.

LONDON — Shares were easier in late trading but were well above morning lows despite an early downturn on Wall Street. The FTSE 100 index at 1521 GMT was down 7.2 at 2,044.5.

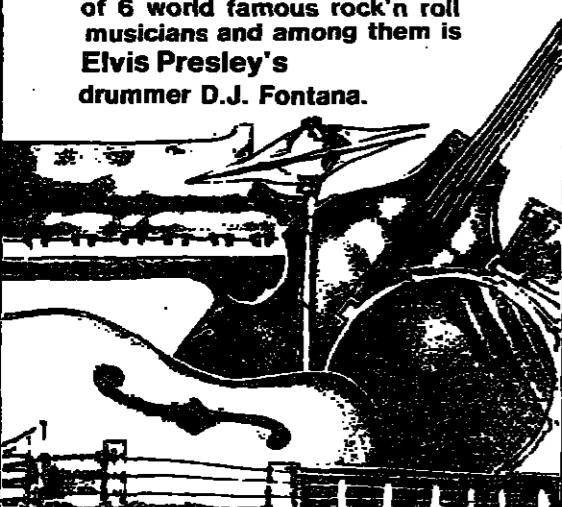
NEW YORK — Stocks turned higher in mid-morning, overcoming a broad early fall centred on blue chips. The Dow was up 2.348.

Under the Patronage of
H.R.H. Prince Faisal Bin Al-Hussein
and
H.R.H. Princess Alia Al-Faisal
**Noor Al Hussein
Foundation /
The National Music
Conservatory**

and
**The American Cultural
Center**
present

A festival of rock music by the SUN RHYTHM SECTION

will be held in Jordan
on Feb. 3, 1989
at the Palace of Culture.
This unique group is comprised
of 6 world famous rock'n roll
musicians and among them is
Elvis Presley's
drummer D.J. Fontana.



Tickets at 3 and 1 JD's are
available at:
Babiche, Istiklal Library - Sweifieh,
Firas Bookshop, the American
Cultural Center, and
the National Music Conservatory.
Young and young at heart
will enjoy this festival of
rock music from the
50's till today.

Shevardnadze in China with summit plans

PEKING (R) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said on arriving in China Wednesday night that the leaders of their two countries would hold a summit meeting of "enormous importance" to the whole world.

Stepping onto the tarmac at Peking airport in a strong wintry wind, Shevardnadze told reporters he had brought a personal letter from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to China's leaders. China and the Soviet Union had already agreed to hold a summit meeting, their first since 1959, and his visit was intended to complete preparations and fix an exact time, Shevardnadze said in a prepared written statement.

"We are starting our negotiations fully aware of the scale of the forthcoming event, of its enormous importance for the normalisation of bilateral rela-

tions and improvement of the situation in the region and in the whole world," the statement said. After two days of talks in Peking and even a quick visit to the Great Wall, Shevardnadze will fly to Shanghai for a meeting Saturday with China's senior leader, 84-year-old Deng Xiaoping.

The last Sino-Soviet summit was between Nikita Khrushchev and Chairman Mao Tse-tung in Peking in 1959 when relations were already deteriorating between the two communist powers over foreign policy and ideological issues.

Andrei Gromyko, who accom-

panied Khrushchev on that ill-fated mission, was the last Soviet foreign minister to visit China. Fierce fighting broke out along the Sino-Soviet border in the 1960s and relations remained hostile until the early 1980s.

"We are convinced that the summit will open a new chapter in the history of two neighbouring countries," Shevardnadze said. Officials on both sides have said Gorbachev is likely to visit China in the first half of this year.

Informed Chinese sources said concerns over Deng's health could mean an early summit but a Foreign Ministry spokesman dismissed as "utterly groundless" rumours that Deng was ill.

The tone of Shevardnadze's statement was a far cry from the polemics that characterised Sino-Soviet relations just a few years ago.

The Soviet foreign minister de-

scribed his Chinese counterpart as "my esteemed colleague, comrade Qian Qichen" and he praised China's successful reforms.

Speaking briefly to reporters, Shevardnadze said the basis of a new Sino-Soviet relationship would be peaceful coexistence and mutual respect.

He did not reveal the contents of Gorbachev's letter. Diplomats say the two sides have reached a broad agreement on settling the 10-year-old Kampuchean conflict under which Vietnam, Moscow's ally, would withdraw by September the troops it has maintained in Kampuchea since 1978 and China would phase out support for guerrilla forces, dominated by the Khmer Rouge.

Troop movements on the border and possible verification by inspectors are also expected to be raised in Peking.

Nikolai Chervov, a senior official on the armed forces general staff, said on Soviet television Tuesday that Moscow would soon start what he said was the second reduction of Soviet forces in Mongolia.

"We shall withdraw from there 75 per cent of our troops and our entire air force," Chervov told a live phone-in programme, without giving a date for the pullout.

"We expect (Shevardnadze's) visit and especially the summit meeting to yield considerable results which will fully back up the measures which we have taken unilaterally to reduce our armed forces."

The remaining stumbling block to improved relations, the presence of more than 100,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan since 1979, should be removed when the pullout is completed Feb. 15 in accordance with U.N.-sponsored accords.

5 sentenced in Britain's biggest heist

LONDON (AP) — Five men have been convicted and jailed for stealing at least £30 million (\$53 million) in cash, gold, silver, gems and other valuables in Britain's biggest robbery.

Police say about two-thirds of the haul is still missing. Valerio Vicci, the 34-year-old Italian who masterminded the robbery at a London safe deposit centre, was sentenced to 22 years in prison Monday after the two-month jury trial at London's old Bailey central criminal court.

Detectives, speaking on condition of anonymity, said they thought Vicci, who had almost one month to dispose of the haul before he was arrested, still controls much of it.

One Scotland Yard detective said: "He is set for a very comfortable retirement when he gets out" of prison.

Vicci, who was born in Ascoli in eastern Italy, was also sentenced to a 12-year term Monday for a firearms offence to run concurrently with the other sentence.

Assisted by Parvez Latiff, the debt-ridden owner of the safe deposit centre, the gang broke into 120 deposit boxes July 12, 1987, and stole enough valuables to fill a bathtub at their hideout, prosecutor Roy Amlot told the court.

Vicci and an accomplice posed as customers at the safe deposit centre across from Harrods department store in the expensive Knightsbridge area.

Once inside, they pulled guns on security guards and on Latiff, 32, who concealed his involvement. They and other gang members spent two hours breaking open boxes, taking goods such as a 40-carat di-

amond, since recovered, belonging to the wife of West German industrialist Gerd Rudolph Flick.

One robber cried, "bingo," when he opened a box containing £150,000 (£265,000) worth of cocaine, the court heard. Vicci cut his finger on one box, took off his glove, and left a fingerprint, which allowed police to arrest him a week before he planned to flee to South America.

Latiff, who had been promised one-third of the haul, was sentenced to 18 years in prison for robbery and five years concurrently for possessing a gun.

One accomplice, David Poole, was given 16 years with a five-year concurrent sentence. Another, Peter O'Donoghue, was given an 11-year sentence Tuesday.

"Some you win, some you

lose," O'Donoghue said as he was led from the court.

An Israeli-born former antique dealer, Israel Palkas, got a 10-year sentence for handling £750,000 (\$1.3 million) worth of stolen property.

Vicci estimated the haul was worth £40 million (\$70 million), and detectives said it was worth at least £30 million (\$53 million).

Police said about £10 million (\$17 million) worth of the haul has been recovered. They said about £7 million (\$12 million) worth of that will be returned to owners, but that about £3 million (\$5 million) remains unclaimed.

Police think many of the mainly foreign owners may not have claimed items of stolen property because they want to conceal the full extent of their wealth for political, tax or other reasons.



FOUND INNOCENT AFTER 30 YEARS — A Japanese man who spent 30 years on death row for the murder of a six-year-old girl was cleared of the charge Monday and released. Masao Akabori, 59, right, was found innocent in a retrial in Shizuoka that began in October, 1987, following appeals by him and his supporters.

African students ask to quit China

PEKING (R) — Forty-four African students in Nanking, scene of racial clashes in December, have petitioned their Peking embassies to let them leave China "at all costs," students said Wednesday.

Their petition complained that they were being used as "propaganda tools" by African governments and Peking, accusing diplomats of "sacrificing students for a racist-tinged friendship" by forcing them to stay.

"With our long experience in the Chinese society... there is no other way to describe the Chinese-African student problem but as one rooted in racial discrimination," it said.

Decades of "public education" was the only way to eradicate racism and that as "the future promoters of diplomatic ties" African students' only option was to leave, it said.

African students in Nanking and Peking have been asking to be sent home since the unrest of late December. So far only Gambian Alpha Robinson, accused by China of inciting the clashes, is known to have left.

Representatives of the General Union of African Students in

China gave copies of the petition to embassies this week along with a statement signed by 138 foreign students in Nanking.

The second document includes the signatures of American, European, Japanese and Soviet students as well as Africans. It alleges college authorities deliberately provoked the clashes to punish students for breaking rules.

Thousands of Chinese attacked a foreign student dormitory at Nanking's Hehai University after a racial brawl on Christmas Eve, and four days of anti-black demonstrations followed.

Police later held more than 130 foreign students incommunicado in a guest house for 10 days to investigate alleged African "ring-leaders" of the initial fighting.

"Subsequent treatment by the police was beyond the protection of our own safety... many of us were beaten, some with electric prods, while all of us were restricted from phone calls; visits from diplomats or friends," the second statement said.

"We were treated like prisoners as if we were guilty," it said, adding the incidents had deepened racism in China and

COLUMN

Kenya's famous python dies

NAIROBI (R) — Omieri, the famous python reputed in western Kenya to be the source of good fortune, has died, Kenya's national museums announced. The museum said Omieri died Saturday after a long illness. Environmentalists said the three-metre python had apparently not recovered from burns it accidentally received in 1987, when it had to be brought from Nyanza to Kenya's capital, Nairobi, for treatment. Omieri's removal sparked a heated national debate, with members of parliament expressing fears that unless the python was returned to Nyanza the province could be struck by a series of calamities, including drought. Omieri, said to be the giver of rains, good harvests and fish, was later returned to Nyanza.

Editor reveals Gorbachev's salary

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev earns more than 1,500 roubles (\$2,500) a month and donated the \$600,000 he received from U.S. sales of his latest book to the Communist Party. But the figure, revealed apparently for the first time by Ogonoyok magazine editor Vitaly Korotich, is only a fraction of the annual \$250,000 in salary and expenses earned by his superpower opposite-number, U.S. President George Bush. Gorbachev's pay is still generous in a country where the average monthly wage can be as low as 200 roubles (\$330). "People ask: Gorbachev does not get much money so where does his wife get so many new dresses from? It's not a serious question because Mikhail Sergeyevich is not badly paid at all — he gets more than 1,500 roubles (a month)," Korotich said in an interview in the Moldavian youth newspaper, Molodyozh Moldavi. "Why shouldn't he buy his wife a new dress?" Korotich asked in the interview in a recent edition of the newspaper that reached Moscow Tuesday.

China's 'stupid habit of banquets'

PEKING (AP) — A leading newspaper Wednesday criticised China's "stupid habit of banquets," saying they waste money and don't match up to parties in the United States, Japan, Britain and West Germany. In five related articles, Economic Information (Jingji Cankao) said Chinese officials eat, drink and waste too much during their ubiquitous feasts, impoverishing and debilitating the revelers. The articles are part of a campaign in the state-run press to illuminate social problems resulting from China's economic reforms, which have loosened many restrictions. One such article on liquor in the China Youth News called the Chinese spirit Maotai an "all-purpose grease" for bribing officials. Wednesday's stories were published four days before the start of the spring festival, the lunar new year, China's biggest holiday.

Thieves steal exotic ingredient

HONG KONG (AP) — Thieves feeding a market voracious for exotic food stole more than 454 kilograms of shark fins, an ingredient in a popular soup, authorities said. The fins, worth about \$64,000, were stolen from the Shu Kee seafood store in Hong Kong, said a police spokesman. A bowl of shark's fin soup, which some believe can help preserve youth, can cost up to \$35. In August, thieves took 71 kilograms of bird's nests worth \$134,000. The nests, which are made from the saliva of swallows, are considered a health food, particularly favoured by the elderly.

Married chess players draw

BELLEVUE, Washington (AP) — John Donaldson, and Elena Akhmedovskaya, the American and Soviet chess players who eloped in November, played to a draw on a huge playing board at a shopping centre exhibition match. For their marriage, they might have been best, Donaldson admitted after the match. "It's in my heart. Maybe married couples shouldn't play against one another," he said. They played their first game against one another on a 2.44-metre chessboard. "During the game, the couple smiled repeatedly at one another. That was because we both thought we were winning," Donaldson said. Akhmedovskaya, ranked fourth among women chess players, eloped to Germany from a tournament in Greece.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

No sex please, we are mafia

PALERMO, Sicily (R) — Jailed mafia gangsters would reject the chance of monthly sex with wives or girlfriends because it would be an insult to their honour, an inquiry in a Turin newspaper said Wednesday. La Stampa, quoting prisoners, magistrates and a psychologist said most inmates of Palermo's Ucciardone jail month as a way of easing tension. "What an embarrassment. It's bad enough just seeing your woman in prison, let alone doing the rest," a recently released prisoner identified as Matteo said. "When you're inside you forget everything. It's a rule which holds for everyone, it's a code, a matter of honour." He told the newspaper that other inmates beat a prisoner who touched his wife's breasts during a visit. "We told him to be a man and we had to beat him so he understood."

Jackson in Moscow

MOSCOW (R) — U.S. civil rights activist Jesse Jackson met Soviet Communist Party Politburo member Alexander Yakovlev Tuesday and called for closer U.S.-Soviet cooperation on disarmament, space exploration and in resolving regional conflicts, poverty and illiteracy. TASS news agency said Jackson also called for joint action to end apartheid in South Africa and civil war in Afghanistan and Central America. "The U.S. and the Soviet Union, as the two superpowers, have the most responsibility to set the pace for new priorities in the world," he said. "Just as there has been an arms race, there must now be a race for arms reduction." Jackson, who is scheduled to visit Armenia, toured a hospital treating children injured in last month's earthquake there.

Sikh extremists kill family

AMRITSAR (AP) — Sikh extremists armed with Chinese assault rifles barged into a farmer's house in the northern state of Punjab and shot him and his five relatives dead, a senior police official said Wednesday. The floor in the farmer's house in Ladoh village, 34 kilometres from this holy city of Sikhs, was covered with blood after the killings Tuesday, senior police superintendent Sanjeev Gupta said. The victims, identified as Bakhsish Singh, his wife Kulwant Kaur and their two sons and two daughters-in-law, were converts to the Sikh faith, Gupta said. "The bodies were piled in a corner of the bullet-riddled room and utensils smeared in blood lay scattered," he said. A blood-soaked kirpan, the traditional sword carried by all Sikh men, lay next to Bakhsish Singh, Gupta said. Police believe seven or eight gunmen fired on the family and escaped under cover of darkness.

Armstrong named envoy to Japan

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush intends to nominate Michael H. Armstrong, currently under secretary of state for political affairs, as the new U.S. ambassador to Japan, it was learned Tuesday. Armstrong is the highest-ranking career foreign service officer at the State Department. He succeeds Mike Mansfield, who has retired.

Critics get their turn at Tower

WASHINGTON (AP) — A conservative activist told Senate Armed Services Committee Tuesday that he encountered Defence Secretary-designate John Tower in an inebriated condition on several occasions accompanied by women other than his wife.

The witness, Paul Weyrich, chairman of the Free Congress foundation, has opposed Tower's nomination on grounds he is soft on "Star Wars," the proposed space-based nuclear defence shield for the United States.

Tuesday, Weyrich questioned whether Tower had the moral character to oversee Defence Department reforms that President George Bush has promised he would initiate.

"I have made enough personal observations of this man here in Washington to have serious reservations about his moral char-



John Tower

acter," Weyrich said.

Weyrich claimed that Bush's transition team received hundreds of letters criticising Tower, some containing specific allegations of "moral impropriety" against the nominee, but did not bring the letters to the president's attention.

Weyrich said he never saw the letters, but "I have encountered the senator in a condition lacking sobriety as well as with women he was not married to."

Canadian Indians claim independence

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — Defiant Haida Indians said Tuesday they had issued themselves passports and a flag and planned to govern their island homeland as an independent country.

The Haida, who live in the Queen Charlotte Islands north of Vancouver, said they had never surrendered their land and saw no point in negotiating land claims with a Canadian government which insisted they give up their title to it.

"It's their negotiating process which they didn't ask us about, it's not acceptable to us," Miles Richardson, president of the council of the Haida nation, said from the island town of Masset. "We have absolutely no intention of ever selling," the title to the islands, he said.

Richardson said there were about 5,000 Haida living in the Queen Charlottes, with a further 1,000 living in Alaska.

Richardson said the Indians decided at their weekend annual assembly to issue themselves passports for travel abroad and had consecrated their own red-and-white flag, depicting an eagle and a raven to represent the two distinct Haida clans.

Richardson said the Haida were tired of watching others plunder their timber and fish resources and planned to stop a gold mine project proposed by city resources, a publicly traded Australian firm. "We've decided it's not going ahead," he said.

You have to realise this is part of a negotiating strategy," said Indian Affairs Department Spokesman Richard van Loon, who said the government was not currently involved in any direct land negotiations with the Haida.

He added that the Indians appeared to be doing nothing unlawful. "It is not illegal in Canada to make a declaration like that," he said.

Oil slick hits wildlife in Antarctica

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — An Argentine oceanographic and supply ship sank in heavy seas after running aground off Antarctica, and authorities in the region said oil from the ship had created a 16-kilometre slick that was killing wildlife.

No one was injured in the sinking late Tuesday of the 122-metre Bahai Paraiso, which began leaking diesel fuel after striking rocks Saturday, the government news agency TELAM reported, citing a navy communiqué.

It did not say whether the double-hulled ship broke up or if diesel oil had spilled when it sank, and the depth of the water was not immediately known.

The U.S. National Science Foundation had warned before

the vessel went down that the Antarctic could face ecological calamity if the 946,350 litres of diesel fuel aboard the ship were to spill.

Officials from the foundation, the Greenpeace Environmental Group and a U.S. research facility near the shipwreck said fuel that leaked from the vessel before it sank had killed krill, a shrimp-like crustacean that is a vital part of the Antarctic food chain, affecting gulls and penguins.

"The krill are dying; they are literally jumping out of the water," the New Zealand Press Association quoted a Greenpeace spokesman, Peter Bogart, as saying. "Seabirds attracted by the krill are diving into the slick... it's a real environmental disaster in

no uncertain terms."

Bogart said the information was relayed by an officer at the U.S. Palmer Research Station on the Antarctic peninsula, which is 3.2 kilometres from the shipwreck. A station spokesman, talking to the AP by telephone on condition of anonymity, said leaking oil had caused a 16-kilometre slick.

The ship had been carrying supplies including jet fuel, gasoline and canisters of compressed gases to the Argentine Esperanza station near the tip of the peninsula, the National Science Foundation said in a statement released in Washington.

More than 300 tourists and crew were evacuated from the ship after it ran aground about

966 kilometres south of Cape Horn, the tip of South America. Salvage efforts had been hampered by 80 kilometre per hour winds.

The ship sustained a 11-metre-long gash in its hull, and some diesel fuel began leaking, washing ashore near Palmer Station, the foundation said.

Foundation spokesman Jack Renner said Tuesday before the ship sank that the leak, which was threatening penguins and other wildlife, had stopped.

"Scientists are concerned that some research search projects may already have been affected by the leak," a foundation statement said. It said two Argentine salvage vessels were expected to arrive Thursday or Friday.

Bush — a man of magic, hand buzzers

WASHINGTON (R) — In the kinder and gentler world of George Bush there's a fun-loving side not seen in public — that of amateur magician and joker known to shake hands with a hidden handbuzzer.

According to White House sources familiar with his habits, Bush has been known to surprise people by handing them dollar bills that mysteriously disappear, wallets that explode and offering a handshake with a vibrating buzzer that tingles.

He even has been given to surprising people with such classic novelties as noise-making cushions, according to one White House source.

Although Bush, 64, has been in the public eye for most of his

adult life — including the last eight years as vice president — relatively little is known about the private man.

Only in the aftermath of the Nov. 8 election did the world realise that he is an avid, and expert, fisherman. And it took presidential politics to reveal his penchant for Chinese food, horse shoe pitching and jogging.

Bush has no plans, as far as is known, to take hand buzzers along for any summit with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev or to perform magic at cabinet sessions.

However, sources said Bush has given ex-president Reagan magic tricks for gifts.

Al Cohen, owner of Al's Magic Shop three blocks from the White

House, is sure he did. He said Bush bought a \$40 "mirage" bowl and added, "I believe he gave it to President Reagan."

The bowl — which looks like a covered bowl or small wok with a hole on top — gives the appearance that money or other objects placed inside can be easily grabbed from on top. But it's an optical illusion and the items are really out of reach.

One of Bush's self-appointed tasks as Reagan's vice president was to collect jokes to tell his chief each morning.

Cohen features in his window a large photograph of himself and a smiling George Bush, with the words: "Congratulations to our most famous customer."

Cohen said Bush has visited the

store a number of times or has sent aides, usually around the Christmas season.

A White House source said Bush usually buys tricks and novelty items for his 10 grandchildren — and tries them out first.

Bush, according to Al Cohen, is not into buying cheap stuff. He said the president bought a disappearing deck of card box for over \$60. Put a deck of cards inside it and the cards disappear.

During the last weekend of the campaign, one of Bush's trick gadgets surfaced.

He closed off a session with reporters by holding up an electronic noisemaker sounding like a screeching bomb and said: "I'm terminating this news conference."



Norodom Sihanouk

Sihanouk will back Jakarta solution

PEKING (AP) — Kampuchean leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk said Wednesday he would back any solution to the Kampuchean conflict reached unanimously at an upcoming meeting of the warring groups.

"I, my party and my army will loyally approve, support and apply any accord," the prince said in a statement.

The accord must first be approved by three parties meeting in Indonesia Feb. 19-21. They include Hun Sen, premier of the Vietnamese-backed government in Kampuchea, Son Sann, a Western-leaning Kampuchean leader, and Khieu Samphan, a top official in the communist Khmer Rouge group.

Sihanouk said he made the statement to counter reports that he "sought to retard as much as possible the resolution of the (Kampuchean) question."

Late last week, Sihanouk cancelled a trip to Jakarta for the talks because, he said, the Vietnamese-backed government in Kampuchea had rejected his own recent peace proposal.

In Wednesday's statement, he said he had been criticised for his decision to boycott the meeting.

In his peace plan, Sihanouk proposed that an international peace-keeping force supervise the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops. Hun Sen claimed the plan would facilitate the return to power of the Khmer Rouge, the most powerful of the three rebel groups.

The Khmer Rouge ruled Kampuchea from 1975 to late 1978, killing hundreds of thousands of people to enforce its brand of communism. Vietnam's intervention in December 1978 eventually replaced the pro-Peking Khmer Rouge with a pro-Hanoi government.

Vietnam, Laos, the warring parties of Kampuchea and the members of the non-communist Association of South-East Asian Nations were to meet in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, for a second session of multilateral peace talks. The first meeting took place last July.

The association includes Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei.

Last month, China and Vietnam held their first high-level meeting since 1979, when China attacked Vietnam to "punish" it for its invasion of Kampuchea.

In the negotiations, Vietnam reportedly agreed to withdraw its troops by September, assuming a political solution could be reached. Hanoi also agreed that an international group could supervise the withdrawal.

In return, China reportedly agreed to slow its aid to the Kampuchean rebel coalition as Vietnam withdraws its troops.

The reported agreement did not represent a change in position of either country. Both had issued public statements before the meeting spelling out their positions.